AMELIA.

BY

HENRY FIELDING.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

EMBELLISHED WITH ENGRAVINGS.

VOL. II.

FELICES TER ET AMPLIUS,
QUOS IRRUPTA TENET COPULA.

Γυναικὸς οὐδὲν χρῆμ' ἀνὴρ λαίζεται
Ἐσθλῆς ἄμεινον οὐδὲ ῥίγιον κακῆς.

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AMELIA.

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

In which the Reader will meet with an old Acquaintance.

BOOTH's affairs were putting on a better aſpect than they had ever worn before, and he was willing to make uſe of the opportunity of one day in ſeven to taſte the freſh air.

At nine in the morning he went to pay a viſit to his old friend Colonel James, reſolving, if poſſible, to have a full explanation of that behaviour which appeared to him ſo myſterious; but the colonel was as inacceſſible as the beſt defended fortreſs: and it was as impoſſible for Booth to paſs beyond his entry, as the Spaniards found it to take Gibraltar. He received the uſual anſwers: firſt, that the colonel was not ſtirring; and, an hour after, that he was gone out. All that he got by aſking farther queſtions, was only to receive ſtill ruder and ruder anſwers; by which, if he had been very ſagacious, he might have been ſatisfied how little worth his while it was to deſire to go in: for the porter at a great man's door is a kind of thermometer, by which you may diſcover the warmth or coldneſs of his maſter's friendſhip. Nay, in the higheſt ſtations of all, as the great man himſelf hath his different kinds of ſalutation, from an hearty embrace with a kiſs, and 'My dear lord,' or 'Dear Sir Charles,' down to, 'Well, Mr. ------, what would you have me do?' ſo the porter to ſome bows with reſpect, to others with a ſmile, to ſome he bows more, to others leſs low, to others not at all. Some he juſt lets in, and others he juſt ſhuts out. And in all this they ſo well correſpond, that one would be inclined to think that the great man and his porter had compared their liſts together, and,

like two actors concerned to act different parts in the same scene, had rehearsed their parts privately together, before they ventured to perform in public.

Though Booth did not, perhaps, see the whole matter in this just light, for that in reality it is, yet he was discerning enough to conclude from the behaviour of the servant, especially when he considered that of the master likewise, that he had entirely lost the friendship of James; and this conviction gave him a concern, that not only the flattering prospect of his lordship's favour was not able to compensate, but which even obliterated, and made him for a while forget the situation in which he had left his Amelia; and he wandered about almost two hours, scarce knowing where he went, till at last he dropped into a coffee-house near St. James's, where he sat himself down.

He had scarce drank his dish of coffee, before he heard a young officer of the Guards cry to another, 'Od, d---n me, Jack, here he comes---here's old ho-'nour and dignity, faith!' Upon which he saw a chair open, and out issued a most erect and stately figure indeed, with a vast perriwig on his head, and a vast hat under his arm. This august personage, having entered the room, walked directly up to the upper end, where having paid his respects to all present, of any note, to each according to seniority, he at last cast his eyes on Booth, and very civilly, though somewhat coolly, asked him how he did.

Booth, who had long recognized the features of his old acquaintance Major Bath, returned the compliment with a very low bow; but did not venture to make the first advance in familiarity, as he was truly possessed of that quality which the Greeks considered in the highest light of honour, and which we term modesty; though, indeed, neither ours nor the Latin language hath any word adequate to the idea of the original.

The colonel, after having discharged himself of two or three articles of news, and made his comments upon them, when the next chair to him became vacant, called

Booth

Booth to fill it. He then aſked him ſeveral queſtions relating to his affairs; and when he heard he was out of the army, adviſed him earneſtly to uſe all means to get in again; ſaying, that he was a pretty lad, and they muſt not loſe him.

Booth told him in a whiſper, that he had a great deal to ſay to him on that ſubject, if they were in a more private place; upon this the colonel propoſed a walk in the Park, which the other readily accepted.

During their walk, Booth opened his heart; and, among other matters, acquainted Colonel Bath, that he feared he had loſt the friendſhip of Colonel James; 'Though I am not,' ſaid he, 'conſcious of having 'done the leaſt thing to deſerve it.'

Bath anſwered, 'You are certainly miſtaken, Mr. 'Booth. I have, indeed, ſcarce ſeen my brother ſince 'my coming to town; for I have been here but two 'days: however, I am convinced he is a man of too 'nice honour to do any thing inconſiſtent with the true 'dignity of a gentleman.' Booth anſwered, he was far from accuſing him of any thing diſhonourable. 'D--n 'me,' ſaid Bath, 'if there is a man alive can or dare 'accuſe him: if you have the leaſt reaſon to take any 'thing ill, why don't you go to him? You are a gen-'tleman; and his rank doth not protect him from giv-'ing you ſatisfaction.'---'The affair is not of any ſuch 'kind,' ſays Booth; 'I have great obligations to the 'colonel, and have more reaſon to lament than com-'plain; and if I could but ſee him, I am convinced I 'ſhould have no cauſe for either; but I cannot get 'within his houſe: it was but an hour ago, a ſervant 'of his turned me rudely from the door.'---'Did a 'ſervant of my brother uſe you rudely?' ſaid the colo-nel with the utmoſt gravity. 'I do not know, Sir, in 'what light you ſee ſuch things; but to me the af-'front of a ſervant is the affront of the maſter; 'and if he doth not immediately puniſh it, by all 'the dignity of a man, I would ſee the maſter's 'noſe between my fingers!' Booth offered to explain,

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but to no purpoſe; the colonel was got into his ſtilts, and it was impoſſible to take him down; nay, it was as much as Booth could poſſibly do to part with him without an actual quarrel; nor would he, perhaps, have been able to have accompliſhed it, had not the colonel by accident turned at laſt to take Booth's ſide of the queſtion: and before they ſeparated, he ſwore many oaths that James ſhould give him proper ſatisfaction.

Such was the end of this preſent interview; ſo little to the content of Booth, that he was heartily concerned he had ever mentioned a ſyllable of the matter to his honourable friend.

CHAP. II.

In which Booth pays a viſit to the noble Lord.

WHEN that day of the week returned, in which Mr. Booth choſe to walk abroad, he went to wait on the noble peer according to his kind invitation.

Booth now found a very different reception with this great man's porter, from what he had met with at his friend the colonel's. He no ſooner told his name, than the porter with a bow told him his lordſhip was at home; the door immediately flew wide open; and he was conducted to an anti-chamber, where a ſervant told him he would acquaint his lordſhip with his arrival. Nor did he wait many minutes before the ſame ſervant returned, and uſhered him to his lordſhip's apartment.

He found my lord alone, and was received by him in the moſt courteous manner imaginable. After the firſt ceremonials were over, his lordſhip began in the following words: 'Mr. Booth, I do aſſure you, you 'are very much obliged to my couſin Elliſon. She 'hath given you ſuch a character, that I ſhall have a 'pleaſure of doing any thing in my power to ſerve you. 'But it will be very difficult, I am afraid, to get you 'a rank at home. In the Weſt Indies, perhaps, or in 'ſome regiment abroad, it may be more eaſy: and 'when I conſider your reputation as a ſoldier, I make 'no doubt of your readineſs to go to any place where

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'the ſervice of your country ſhall call you.' Booth anſwered, that he was highly obliged to his lordſhip, and aſſured him, he would with great chearfulneſs attend his duty in any part of the world. 'The only 'thing grievous in the exchange of countries,' ſaid he, 'in my opinion, is to leave thoſe I love behind me; 'and I am ſure I ſhall never have a ſecond trial equal 'to my firſt. It was very hard, my lord, to leave a 'young wife big with her firſt child, and ſo affected 'with my abſence, that I had the utmoſt reaſon to de-'ſpair of ever ſeeing her more. After ſuch a demon-'ſtration of my reſolution to ſacrifice every other conſi-'deration to my duty, I hope your lordſhip will ho-'nour me with ſome confidence, that I ſhall make no 'objection to ſerve in any country.'---'My dear Mr. 'Booth,' anſwered the lord, 'you ſpeak like a ſoldier; 'and I greatly honour your ſentiments. Indeed, I 'own the juſtice of your inference from the example 'you have given: for to quit a wife, as you ſay, in 'the very infancy of marriage, is, I acknowledge, 'ſome trial of reſolution.' Booth anſwered with a low bow, and then after ſome immaterial converſation, his lordſhip promiſed to ſpeak immediately to the miniſter, and appointed Mr. Booth to come to him on Wedneſday morning, that he might be made acquainted with his patron's ſucceſs. The poor man now bluſhed and looked ſilly, till, after ſome time, he ſummoned up all his courage to his aſſiſtance, and relying on the other's friendſhip, he opened the whole affair of his circumſtances, and confeſſed he did not dare to ſtir from his lodgings above one day in ſeven. His lordſhip expreſſed great concern at this account, and very kindly promiſed to take ſome opportunity of calling on him at his couſin Elliſon's; when he hoped, he ſaid, to bring him comfortable tidings.

Booth ſoon afterwards took his leave with the moſt profuſe acknowledgements for ſo much goodneſs, and haſtened home to acquaint his Amelia with what had ſo ſo greatly overjoyed him. She highly congratulated him

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on having found so generous and powerful a friend, towards whom both their bosoms burnt with the warmest sentiments of gratitude. She was not however contented, till she had made Booth renew his promise, in the most solemn manner, of taking her with him; after which they sat down with their little children to a scrag of mutton and broth, with the highest satisfaction, and very heartily drank his lordship's health in a pot of porter.

In the afternoon this happy couple, if the reader will allow me to call poor people happy, drank tea with Mrs. Ellison, where his lordship's praises being again repeated by both the husband and wife, were very loudly echoed by Mrs. Ellison. While they were here, the young lady whom we have mentioned at the end of the last book to have made a fourth at whist, and with whom Amelia seemed so much pleased, came in; she was just returned to town from a short visit in the country, and her present visit was unexpected. It was, however, very agreeable to Amelia, who liked her still better on a second interview, and was resolved to solicit her farther acquaintance.

Mrs. Bennet still maintained some little reserve, but was much more familiar and communicative than before. She appeared moreover to be as little ceremonious as Mrs. Ellison had reported her, and very readily accepted Amelia's apology for not paying her the first visit, and agreed to drink tea with her the very next afternoon.

Whilst the above mentioned company were sitting in Mrs. Ellison's parlour, Serjeant Atkinson passed by the window, and knocked at the door. Mrs. Ellison no sooner saw him, than she said, 'Pray, Mr. Booth, 'who is that genteel young serjeant? He was here every 'day last week to enquire after you.' This was indeed a fact; the serjeant was apprehensive of the design of Murphy; but as the poor fellow had received all his answers from the maid or Mrs. Ellison, Booth had never heard a word of the matter. He was however greatly

greatly pleaſed with what he was now told, and burſt forth into great praiſes of the ſerjeant, which were ſeconded by Amelia; who added, that he was her foſter-brother, and ſhe believed one of the honeſteſt fellows in the world.

'And I'll ſwear,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'he is one 'of the prettieſt.---Do, Mr. Booth, deſire him to walk 'in. A ſerjeant of the guards is a gentleman; and 'I had rather give ſuch a man as you deſcribe a diſh 'of tea, than any beau fribble of them all.'

Booth wanted no great ſolicitation to ſhew any kind of regard to Atkinſon; and accordingly, the ſerjeant was uſhered in, though not without ſome reluctance on his ſide. There is, perhaps, nothing more uneaſy than thoſe ſenſations which the French call the *mauvaiſe honte*, nor any more difficult to conquer; and poor Atkinſon would, I am perſuaded, have mounted a breach with leſs concern, than he ſhewed in walking acroſs a room before three ladies, two of whom were his avowed well-wiſhers.

Though I do not entirely agree with the late learned Mr. Eſſex, the celebrated dancing maſter's opinion, that dancing is the rudiment of polite education, as he would, I apprehend, exclude every other art and ſcience; yet it is certain, that perſons whoſe feet have never been under the hands of the profeſſors of that art are apt to diſcover this want in their education in every motion, nay, even when they ſtand or ſit ſtill. They ſeem, indeed, to be overburdened with limbs, which they know not how to uſe; as if when nature had finiſhed her work, the dancing-maſter ſtill is neceſſary to put it in motion.

Atkinſon was at preſent an example of this obſervation, which doth ſo much honour to a profeſſion for which I have a very high regard. He was handſome, and exquiſitely well made; and yet, as he had never learnt to dance, he made ſo aukward an appearance in Mrs. Elliſon's parlour, that the good lady herſelf, who had invited him in, could at firſt ſcarce refrain from laughter at his behaviour.

He had not, however, been long in the room, before admiration of his perſon got the better of ſuch riſible ideas. So great is the advantage of beauty in men, as well as women, and ſo ſure is this quality in either ſex of procuring ſome regard from the beholder!

The exceeding courteous behaviour of Mrs. Elliſon, joined to that of Amelia and Booth, at length diſſipated the uneaſineſs of Atkinſon; and he gained ſufficient confidence to tell the company ſome entertaining ſtories of accidents that had happened in the army within his knowledge; which, though they greatly pleaſed all preſent, are not, however, of conſequence enough to have a place in this hiſtory.

Mrs. Elliſon was ſo very importunate with her company to ſtay ſupper, that they all conſented. As for the ſerjeant, he ſeemed to be none of the leaſt welcome gueſts. She was, indeed, ſo pleaſed with what ſhe had heard of him, and what ſhe ſaw of him, that when a little warmed with wine, for ſhe was no flincher at the bottle, ſhe began to indulge ſome freedoms in her diſcourſe towards him, that a little offended Amelia's delicacy; nay, they did not ſeem to be highly reliſhed by the other lady; though I am far from inſinuating that theſe exceeded the bounds of decorum, or were, indeed, greater liberties than ladies of the middle age, and eſpecially widows, do frequently allow to themſelves.

Relating principally to the Affairs of Serjeant Atkinſon.

CHAP. III.

THE next day, when all the ſame company, Atkinſon only excepted, aſſembled in Amelia's apartment, Mrs. Elliſon preſently began to diſcourſe of him, and that in terms not only of approbation, but even of affection. She called him her clever ſerjeant, and her dear ſerjeant; repeated often that he was the prettieſt fellow in the army; and ſaid it was a thouſand pities he had not a commiſſion; for that, if he had, ſhe was ſure he would become a general.

'I am of your opinion, Madam,' anſwered Booth; 'and

'and he hath got one hundred pounds of his own 'already: if he could find a wife now to help him to 'two or three hundred more, I think he might eaſily 'get a commiſſion in a marching regiment; for I am 'convinced there is no colonel in the army would refuſe 'him.'

'Refuſe him, indeed!' ſays Mrs. Elliſon! 'no: he 'would be a very pretty colonel that did. And upon 'my honour, I believe there are very few ladies who 'would refuſe him, if he had but a proper opportunity 'of ſoliciting them. The colonel and the lady both 'would be better off, than with one of thoſe pretty 'maſters that I ſee walking about, and dragging their 'long ſwords after them, when they ſhould rather drag 'their leading ſtrings.'

'Well ſaid,' cries Booth, 'and ſpoken like a woman 'of ſpirit! Indeed, I believe they would be both better 'ſerved.'

'True, captain,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon; I would 'rather leave the two firſt ſyllables out of the word 'gentleman, than the laſt.'

'Nay, I aſſure you,' replied Booth, there is not a 'quieter creature in the world. Though the fellow 'hath the bravery of a lion, he hath the meekneſs of a 'lamb. I can tell you ſtories enow of that kind, and 'ſo can my dear Amelia, when he was a boy.

'O, if the match ſticks there,' cries Amelia, 'I 'poſitively will not ſpoil his fortune by my ſilence. I 'can anſwer for him from his infancy, that he was one 'of the beſt-natured lads in the world. I will tell you 'a ſtory or two of him, the truth of which I can teſtify 'from my own knowledge. When he was but ſix 'years old, he was at play with me at my mother's 'houſe, and a great pointing-dog bit him through the 'leg. The poor lad, in the midſt of the anguiſh of 'his wound, declared he was overjoyed it had not hap-'pened to Miſs (for the ſame dog had juſt before ſnapped 'at me, and my petticoats had been my defence.) 'Another inſtance of his goodneſs, which greatly re-

'commended him to my father, and which I have 'loved him for ever ſince, was this: my father was a 'great lover of birds, and ſtrictly forbade the ſpoiling 'of their neſts. Poor Joe was one day caught upon a 'tree, and being concluded guilty, was ſeverely laſhed 'for it; but it was afterwards diſcovered that another 'boy, a friend of Joe's, had robbed the neſt of it's 'young ones, and poor Joe had climbed the tree in 'order to reſtore them; notwithſtanding which, he 'ſubmitted to the puniſhment, rather than he would 'impeach his companion. But if theſe ſtories appear 'childiſh and trifling, the duty and kindneſs he hath 'ſhewn to his mother muſt recommend him to every 'one. Ever ſince he hath been fifteen years old, he 'hath more than half ſupported her; and when my 'brother died, I remember particularly, Joe (at his 'deſire, for he was much his favourite) had one of his 'ſuits given him; but inſtead of his becoming finer on 'that occaſion, another young fellow came to church in 'my brother's cloaths, and my old nurſe appeared the 'ſame Sunday in a new gown, which her ſon had pur-'chaſed for her with the ſale of his legacy.'

'Well, I proteſt, he is a very worthy creature!' ſaid Mrs. Bennet.

'He is a charming fellow!' cries Mrs. Elliſon. 'But then the name of ſerjeant, Captain Booth, there, 'as the play ſays, my pride brings me off again.

'And whatſoever the ſages charge on pride,
'The angels fall, and twenty other good faults
'beſide;
'On earth I'm ſure---I'm ſure---ſomething---calling
'Pride ſaves man, and our ſex too, from falling.'

Here a footman's rap at the door ſhook the room; upon which Mrs. Elliſon, running to the window, cried out, 'Let me die, if it is not my lord! What 'ſhall I do? I muſt be at home to him; but ſuppoſe 'he ſhould enquire for you, captain, what ſhall I ſay? 'or will you go down with me?'

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The company were in ſome confuſion at this inſtant; and before they had agreed on any thing, Booth's little girl came running into the room, and ſaid, there was a prodigious great gentleman coming up ſtairs. She was immediately followed by his lordſhip; who, as he knew Booth muſt be at home, made very little or no enquiry at the door.

Amelia was taken ſomewhat at a ſurprize; but ſhe was too polite to ſhew much confuſion: for though ſhe knew nothing of the town, ſhe had had a genteel education, and kept the beſt company the country afforded. The ceremonies therefore paſſed as uſual, and they all ſat down.

His lordſhip ſoon addreſſed himſelf to Booth, ſaying, 'As I have what I think good news for you, Sir, I 'could not delay giving myſelf the pleaſure of commu- 'nicating it to you. I have mentioned your affair 'where I promiſed you, and I have no doubt of my 'ſucceſs. One may eaſily perceive, you know, from 'the manner of people's behaving upon ſuch occaſions; 'and, indeed, when I related your caſe, I found there 'was much inclination to ſerve you. Great men, Mr. 'Booth, muſt do things in their own time; but I 'think you may depend on having ſomething done 'very ſoon.'

Booth made many acknowledgments for his lordſhip's goodneſs, and now a ſecond time paid all the thanks which would have been due even had the favour been obtained. This art of promiſing is the œconomy of a great man's pride; a ſort of good huſbandry in conferring favours, by which they receive ten-fold in acknowledgments for every obligation; I mean, among thoſe who really intend the ſervice; for there are others who cheat poor men of their thanks, without ever deſigning to deſerve them all.

This matter being ſufficiently diſcuſſed, the converſation took a gayer turn; and my lord began to entertain the ladies with ſome of that elegant diſcourſe,

which, though moſt delightful to hear, it is impoſſible ſhould ever be read.

His lordſhip was ſo highly pleaſed with Amelia, that he could not help being ſomewhat particular to her; but this particularity diſtinguiſhed itſelf only in a higher degree of reſpect, and was ſo very polite, and ſo very diſtant, that ſhe herſelf was pleaſed; and at his departure, which was not till he had far exceeded the length of a common viſit, declared he was the fineſt gentleman ſhe had ever ſeen; with which ſentiment her huſband and Mrs. Elliſon both entirely concurred.

Mrs. Bennet, on the contrary, expreſſed ſome little diſlike to my lord's complaiſance, which ſhe called exceſſive. 'For my own part,' ſaid ſhe, 'I have not 'the leaſt reliſh for thoſe very fine gentlemen. What 'the world generally calls politeneſs, I term inſincerity; 'and I am more charmed with the ſtories which Mrs. 'Booth told us of the honeſt ſerjeant, than with all 'that the fineſt gentlemen in the world ever ſaid in 'their lives.'

'O to be ſure,' cries Mrs. Elliſon; '*All for love, or 'the world well loſt*, is a motto very proper for ſome 'folks to wear in their coat of arms; but the gene-'rality of the world will, I believe, agree with that 'lady's opinion of my couſin, rather than with Mrs. 'Bennet.'

Mrs. Bennet ſeeing Mrs. Elliſon took offence at what ſhe ſaid, thought proper to make ſome apology, which was very readily accepted, and ſo ended the viſit.

We cannot, however, put an end to the chapter, without obſerving that ſuch is the ambitious temper of beauty, that it may always apply to itſelf that celebrated paſſage in Lucan---

Nec quenquam jam ferre poteſt Cæſarve priorem,
Pompeiuſve parem.--------

Indeed, I believe it may be laid down as a general rule, that no woman who hath any great pretenſions to admiration is ever well pleaſed in a company where ſhe perceives

perceives herſelf to fill only the ſecond place. This obſervation, however, I humbly ſubmit to the judgment of the ladies, and hope it will be conſidered as retracted by me, if they ſhall diſſent from my opinion.

CHAP. IV.

Containing Matters that require no Preface.

WHEN Booth and his wife were left alone together, they both extremely exulted in their good fortune, in having found ſo good a friend as his lordſhip; nor were they wanting in very warm expreſſions of their gratitude towards Mrs. Elliſon; after which they began to lay down ſchemes of living when Booth ſhould have his commiſſion of captain; and, after the exacteſt computation, concluded that, with œconomy, they ſhould be able to ſave, at leaſt, fifty pounds a year out of their income, in order to pay their debts.

Theſe matters being well ſettled, Amelia aſked Booth what he thought of Mrs. Bennet. 'I think, 'my dear,' anſwered Booth, 'that ſhe hath been 'formerly a very pretty woman.'---'I am miſtaken,' replied ſhe, 'if ſhe be not a very good creature. I 'don't know I ever took ſuch a liking to any one on ſo 'ſhort acquaintance. I fancy ſhe hath been a very 'ſprightly woman: for, if you obſerve, ſhe diſcovers 'by ſtarts a great vivacity in her countenance.'--- 'I made the ſame obſervation,' cries Booth: 'ſure 'ſome ſtrange misfortune hath befallen her.'---'A 'misfortune indeed!' anſwered Amelia. 'Sure, child, 'you forgot what Mrs. Elliſon told us, that ſhe had 'loſt a beloved huſband; a misfortune which I had 'often wondered at any woman's ſurviving.' At which words ſhe caſt a tender look at Booth; and preſently afterwards throwing herſelf upon his neck, cried, 'O heavens! what a happy creature am I! 'When I conſider the dangers you have gone through, 'how I exult in my bliſs!' The good-natured reader will ſuppoſe that Booth was not deficient in returning ſuch tenderneſs; after which the converſation became too fond to be here related.

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The next morning Mrs. Ellison addressed herself to Booth as follows. 'I shall make no apology, Sir, for 'what I am going to say, as it proceeds from my 'friendship to yourself, and your dear lady. I am 'convinced, then, Sir, there is something more than 'accident in your going abroad only one day in the 'week. Now, Sir, if, as I am afraid, matters are 'not altogether as well as I wish them, I beg, since 'I do not believe you are provided with a lawyer, that 'you will suffer me to recommend one to you. The 'person I shall mention, is, I assure you, of much 'ability in his profession, and I have known him do 'great services to gentlemen under a cloud. Do not 'be ashamed of your circumstances, my dear friend: 'they are a much greater scandal to those who have 'left so much merit unprovided for.'

Booth gave Mrs. Ellison abundance of thanks for her kindness, and explicitly confessed to her that her conjectures were right, and without hesitation accepted the offer of her friend's assistance.

Mrs. Ellison then acquainted him with her apprehensions on this account. She said, she had both yesterday and this morning seen two or three very ugly suspicious fellows pass several times by her window. 'Upon all accounts,' said she, 'my dear Sir, I advise 'you to keep yourself close confined till the lawyer 'hath been with you. I am sure he will get you 'your liberty, at least of walking about within the 'verge. There's something to be done with the board 'of green cloth, I don't know what; but this I know, 'that several gentlemen have lived here a long time 'very comfortably, and have defied all the vengeance 'of their creditors. However, in the mean time, you 'must be a close prisoner with your lady; and I be-'lieve there is no man in England but would exchange 'his liberty for the same gaol.'

She then departed in order to send for the attorney, and presently afterwards the serjeant arrived with news of the like kind. He said, he had scraped an acquaintance

Murphy. 'I hope your honour will pardon me,' cries Atkinſon, 'but I pretended to have a ſmall 'demand upon your honour myſelf, and offered to em-'ploy him in the buſineſs; upon which he told me, that 'if I would go with him to the marſhal's court, and 'make affidavit of my debt, he ſhould be able very 'ſhortly to get it me; "For I ſhall have the captain "in hold," cries he, "within a day or two."---'I 'wiſh, ſaid the ſerjeant, 'I could do your honour any 'ſervice. Shall I walk about all day before the door? 'or ſhall I be porter, and watch it in the inſide, till 'your honour can find ſome means of ſecuring yourſelf? 'I hope you will not be offended at me, but I beg you 'would take care of falling into Murphy's hands; for 'he hath the character of the greateſt villain upon earth. 'I am afraid you will think me too bold, Sir, but I 'have a little money; if it can be of any ſervice, do, 'pray your honour, command it. It can never do me 'ſo much good any other way. Conſider, Sir, I owe 'all I have to yourſelf and my dear miſtreſs.'

Booth ſtood a moment as if he had been thunder-ſtruck; and then, the tears burſting from his eyes, he ſaid: 'Upon my ſoul, Atkinſon, you overcome me! I 'ſcarce ever heard of ſo much goodneſs, nor do I know 'how to expreſs my ſentiments of it. But be aſſured, 'as for your money, I will not accept it; and let it 'ſatisfy you, that in my preſent circumſtances it would 'do me no eſſential ſervice; but this be aſſured of 'likewiſe, that whilſt I live I ſhall never forget the 'kindneſs of the offer. However, as I apprehend I 'may be in ſome danger of fellows getting into the 'houſe, for a day or two, as I have no guard but 'a poor little girl, I will not refuſe the goodneſs you 'offer to ſhew in my protection. And I make no 'doubt but Mrs. Elliſon will let you ſit in her 'parlour for that purpoſe.'

Atkinſon with the utmoſt readineſs undertook the office of porter; and Mrs. Elliſon as readily allotted him a place in her back-parlour, where he continued

three days together, from eight in the morning till twelve at night; during which time, he had ſometimes the company of Mrs. Elliſon, and ſometimes of Booth, Amelia, and Mrs. Bennet too; for this laſt had taken as great a fancy to Amelia, as Amelia had to her; and therefore, as Mr. Booth's affairs were now no ſecret in the neighbourhood, made her frequent viſits during the confinement of her huſband, and conſequently of her own.

Nothing, as I remember, happened in this interval of time, more worthy notice than the following card, which Amelia received from her old acquaintance Mrs. James. 'Mrs. James ſends her compliments 'to Mrs. Booth, and deſires to know how ſhe does; 'for as ſhe hath not had the favour of ſeeing her at 'her own houſe, or of meeting her at any public 'place, in ſo long a time, fears it may be owing to ill 'health.'

Amelia had long given over all thoughts of her friend, and doubted not but that ſhe was as entirely given over by her: ſhe was very much ſurprized at this meſſage, and under ſome doubt whether it was not meant as an inſult, eſpecially from the mention of public places, which ſhe thought ſo inconſiſtent with her preſent circumſtances, of which ſhe ſuppoſed Mrs. James was well apprized. However, at the entreaty of her huſband, who languiſhed for nothing more than to be again reconciled to his friend James, Amelia undertook to pay the lady a viſit, and examine into the myſtery of this conduct, which appeared to her ſo unaccountable.

Mrs. James received her with a degree of civility that amazed Amelia, no leſs than her coldneſs had done before. She reſolved to come to an eclairciſſement; and having ſat out ſome company that came in, when they were alone together, Amelia, after ſome ſilence and many offers to ſpeak, at laſt ſaid, 'My dear 'Jenny, (if you will now ſuffer me to call you by ſo 'familiar a name) have you entirely forgot a certain

'young

'young lady who had the pleaſure of being your intimate acquaintance at Montpelier?'---'Whom do you mean, dear Madam?' cries Mrs. James with great concern. 'I mean myſelf,' anſwered Amelia. 'You ſurprize me, Madam,' replied Mrs. James. 'How can you aſk me that queſtion!'---'Nay, my dear, I do not intend to offend you,' cries Amelia; 'but I am really deſirous to ſolve myſelf the reaſon of that coldneſs which you ſhewed me, when you did me the favour of a viſit. Can you think, my dear, I was not diſappointed, when I expected to meet an intimate friend, to receive a cold formal viſitant? I deſire you to examine your own heart, and anſwer me honeſtly, if you do not think I had ſome little reaſon to be diſſatisfied with your behaviour?'---'Indeed, Mrs. Booth, anſwered the other lady, 'you ſurprize me very much: if there was any thing diſpleaſing to you in my behaviour, I am extremely concerned at it. I did not know I had been defective in any of the rules of civility; but if I was, Madam, I aſk your pardon.'---'Is civility, then, my dear,' replied Amelia, 'a ſynonimous term with friendſhip? Could I have expected, when I parted the laſt time with Miſs Jenny Bath, to have met her the next time in the ſhape of a fine lady, complaining of the hardſhip of climbing up two pair of ſtairs to viſit me, and then approaching me with the diſtant air of a new or ſlight acquaintance? Do you think, my dear Mrs. James, if the tables had been turned, if my fortune had been as high in the world as yours, and you in my diſtreſs and abject condition, that I would not have climbed as high as the Monument to viſit you?'---'Sure, Madam,' cried Mrs. James, 'I miſtake you, or you have greatly miſtaken me. Can you complain of my not viſiting you, who have owed me a viſit almoſt theſe three weeks? Nay, did I not even then ſend you a card, which ſure was doing more than all the friendſhip and good breeding in the world required? But indeed, as I had met you in no

'public

'public place, I really thought you was ill.'---'How can you mention public places to me,' said Amelia, 'when you can hardly be a ſtranger to my 'preſent ſituation? Did you not know, Madam, that 'I was ruined;'----'No, indeed, Madam, did not I, replied Mrs. James; 'I am ſure I ſhould have been 'highly concerned if I had.'---'Why, ſure, my dear,' cries Amelia, 'you could not imagine that we were in 'affluent circumſtances, when you found us in ſuch a 'place, and in ſuch a condition.'---'Nay, my dear,' anſwered Mrs. James, 'ſince you are pleaſed to men-'tion it firſt yourſelf, I own, I was a little ſurprized 'to ſee you in no better lodgings; but I concluded you 'had your reaſons for liking them; and, for my own 'part, I have laid it down as a poſitive rule, never to 'enquire into the private affairs of any one, eſpecially 'of my friends. I am not of the humour of ſome la-'dies, who confine the circle of their acquaintance to 'one part of the town, and would not be known to vi-'ſit in the city for the world. For my part, I never 'dropped an acquaintance with any one, while it was 'reputable to keep it up; and I can ſolemnly declare 'I have not a friend in the world for whom I have a 'greater eſteem than I have for Mrs. Booth.'

At this inſtant, the arrival of a new viſitant put an end to the diſcourſe, and Amelia ſoon after took her leave without the leaſt anger, but with ſome little unavoidable contempt for a lady, in whoſe opinion, as we have hinted before, outward form and ceremony conſtituted the whole eſſence of friendſhip; who valued all her acquaintance alike, as each individual ſerved equally to fill up a place in her viſiting roll; and who, in reality, had not the leaſt concern for the good qualities or well-being of any of them.

CHAP. V.

Containing much heroic Matter.

AT the end of three days, Mrs. Elliſon's friend had ſo far purchaſed Mr. Booth's liberty, that he could walk again abroad within the verge, without any

any danger of having a warrant backed againſt him by the board before he had notice. As for the ill-looked perſons that had given the alarm, it was now diſcovered that another unhappy gentleman, and not Booth, was the object of their purſuit.

Mr. Booth being now delivered from his fears, went, as he had formerly done, to take his morning walk in the Park. Here he met Colonel Bath in company with ſome other officers, and very civilly paid his reſpects to him. But inſtead of returning the ſalute, the colonel looked him full in the face with a very ſtern countenance; and, if he could be ſaid to take any notice of him, it was in ſuch a manner as to inform him he would take no notice of him.

Booth was not more hurt than ſurprized at this behaviour, and reſolved to know the reaſon of it. He therefore watched an opportunity till the colonel was alone, and then walked boldly up to him, and deſired to know if he had given him any offence. The colonel anſwered haſtily, 'Sir, I am above being offended with 'you; nor do I think it conſiſtent with my dignity to 'make you any anſwer!' Booth replied, 'I don't 'know, Sir, that I have done any thing to deſerve this 'treatment.'---'Look'e Sir,' cries the colonel, 'if 'I had not formerly had ſome reſpect for you, I ſhould 'not think you worth my reſentment. However, as 'you are a gentleman born, and an officer, and as I 'have had an eſteem for you, I will give you ſome 'marks of it, by putting it in your power to do your-'ſelf juſtice. I will tell you, therefore, Sir, that you 'have acted like a ſcoundrel!'---'If we were not in the 'Park,' anſwered Booth warmly, 'I would thank you 'very properly for that compliment.'---O Sir!' cries the colonel, 'we can be ſoon in a convenient place.' Upon which Booth anſwered, he would attend him wherever he pleaſed. The colonel then bid him come along, and ſtrutted forward directly up Conſtitution Hill to Hyde Park, Booth following him at firſt, and afterwards walking before him, till they came to that

place which may properly be called the Field of Blood, being that part a little to the left of the ring which heroes have choſen for the ſcene of their exit out of this world.

Booth reached the ring ſome time before the colonel; for he mended not his pace, any more than a Spaniard. To ſay truth, I believe it was not in his power; for he had ſo long accuſtomed himſelf to one and the ſame ſtrut, that as a horſe uſed always to trotting can ſcarce be forced into a gallop, ſo could no paſſion force the colonel to alter his pace.

At length, however, both parties arrived at the liſts, where the colonel very deliberately took off his wig and coat, and laid them on the graſs; and then drawing his ſword, advanced to Booth, who had likewiſe his drawn weapon in his hand, but had made no other preparation for the combat.

The combatants now engaged with great fury, and after two or three paſſes, Booth ran the colonel through the body, and threw him on the ground, at the ſame time poſſeſſing himſelf of the colonel's ſword.

As ſoon as the colonel was become maſter of his ſpeech, he called out to Booth in a very kind voice, and ſaid, 'You have done my buſineſs; and ſatisfied me 'that you are a man of honour, and that my brother 'James muſt have been miſtaken: for I am convinced, 'that no man who will draw his ſword in ſo gallant a 'manner is capable of being a raſcal. D---n me, give 'me a buſs, my dear boy; I aſk your pardon for that 'infamous appellation I diſhonoured your dignity 'with; but, d---n me, if it was not purely out of love, 'and to give you an opportunity of doing yourſelf juſ-'tice, which I own you have done like a man of honour. 'What may be the conſequence I know not; but I 'hope, at leaſt, I ſhall live to reconcile you with my 'brother.'

Booth ſhewed great concern, and even horror in his countenance. 'Why, my dear colonel,' ſaid he,

'would

'would you force me to this? For Heaven's ſake, tell 'me what I have ever done to offend you?'

'Me!' cried the colonel. 'Indeed, my dear child, 'you never did any thing to offend me. Nay, I have 'acted the part of a friend to you in the whole affair. 'I maintained your cauſe with my brother as long as 'decency would permit. I could not flatly contradict 'him, though, indeed, I ſcarce believed him. But what 'could I do? If I had not fought with you, I muſt have 'been obliged to have fought with him; however, I 'hope what is done will be ſufficient, and that matters 'may be *diſcommodated* without your being put to the 'neceſſity of fighting any more on this occaſion.'

'Never regard me,' cried Booth eagerly; 'for hea-'ven's ſake, think of your own preſervation. Let me 'put you into a chair, and get you a ſurgeon.'

'Thou art a noble lad,' cries the colonel, who was now got on his legs, 'and I am glad the buſineſs is ſo 'well over. For though your ſword went quite 'through, it ſlanted ſo, that I apprehend there is little 'danger of life. However, I think there is enough done 'to put an honourable end to the affair, eſpecially as 'you was ſo haſty to diſarm me. I bleed a little, but 'I can walk to the houſe by the water; and if you 'will ſend me a chair thither, I ſhall be obliged to 'you.'

As the colonel refuſed any aſſiſtance, (indeed he was very able to walk without it, though with ſomewhat leſs dignity than uſual) Booth ſet forward to Groſvenor Gate, in order to procure the chair, and ſoon after returned with one to his friend; whom having conveyed into it, he attended himſelf on foot into Bond Street, where then lived a very eminent ſurgeon.

The ſurgeon having probed the wound, turned towards Booth, who was apparently the guilty perſon, and ſaid with a ſmile, 'Upon my word, Sir, you have 'performed the buſineſs with great dexterity.'

'Sir,' cries the colonel to the ſurgeon, 'I would 'not have you imagine I am afraid to die. I think I

'know more what belongs to the dignity of a man;
'and, I believe I have ſhewn it at the head of a line
'of battle. Do not impute my concern to that fear,
'when I aſk you whether there is or is not any dan-
'ger?'

'Really, colonel,' anſwered the ſurgeon, who well knew the complexion of the gentleman then under his hands, 'it would appear like preſumption to ſay, that 'a man who hath been juſt run through the body is in 'no manner of danger. But, this I think, I may 'aſſure you, that I yet perceive no very bad ſymp-'toms, and unleſs ſomething worſe ſhould appear, or 'a fever be the conſequence, I hope you may live to be 'again, with all your dignity, at the head of a line of 'battle.'

'I am glad to hear that is your opinion,' quoth the colonel, 'for I am not deſirous of dying, though I am 'not afraid of it. But if any thing worſe than you 'apprehend ſhould happen, I deſire you will be a wit-'neſs of my declaration, that this young gentleman is 'entirely innocent. I forced him to do what he did.--- 'My dear Booth, I am pleaſed matters are as they are. 'You are the firſt man that ever gained an advantage 'over me; but it was very lucky for you that you diſ-'armed me, and I doubt not but you have the *equani-'mity* to think ſo. If the buſineſs, therefore, hath 'ended without doing any thing to the purpoſe, it 'was fortune's pleaſure, and neither of our faults.'

Booth heartily embraced the colonel, and aſſured him of the great ſatisfaction he had received from the ſurgeon's opinion: and ſoon after the two combatants took their leave of each other. The colonel, after he was dreſſed, went in a chair to his lodgings, and Booth walked on foot to his; where he luckily arrived without meeting any of Mr. Murphy's gang; a danger which never once occurred to his imagination till he was out of it.

The affair he had been about had, indeed, ſo entirely occupied his mind, that it had obliterated every other idea;

idea; among the reſt, it cauſed him ſo abſolutely to forget the time of the day, that though he had exceeded the time of dining above two hours, he had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of being at home later than uſual.

CHAP. VI.

In which the Reader will find Matter worthy his Conſideration.

AMELIA having waited above an hour for her huſband, concluded, as he was the moſt punctual man alive, that he had met with ſome engagement abroad, and ſat down to her meal with her children; which, as it was always uncomfortable in the abſence of her huſband, was very ſhort; ſo that, before his return, all the apparatus of dining was entirely removed.

Booth ſat ſome time with his wife, expecting every minute when the little maid would make her appearance; at laſt, curioſity, I believe, rather than appetite, made him aſk, how long it was to dinner. 'To dinner, 'my dear!' anſwerd Amelia; 'ſure you have dined, I 'hope?' Booth replied in the negative; upon which, his wife ſtarted from her chair, and beſtirred herſelf as nimbly to provide him a repaſt, as the moſt induſtrious hoſteſs in the kingdom doth, when ſome unexpected gueſt of extraordinary quality arrives at her houſe.

The reader hath not, I think, from any paſſages hitherto recorded in this hiſtory, had much reaſon to accuſe Amelia of a blameable curioſity; he will not, I hope, conclude that ſhe gave an inſtance of any ſuch fault, when, upon Booth's having ſo long overſtayed his time, and ſo greatly miſtaken the hour of the day, and upon ſome other circumſtances of his behaviour, (for he was too honeſt to be good at concealing any of his thoughts) ſhe ſaid to him, after he had done eating, 'My dear, I am ſure ſomething more than ordinary 'hath happened to-day, and I beg you will tell me what 'it is.'

Booth anſwered, that nothing of any conſequence had happened; that he had been detained by a friend, whom he met accidentally, longer than he expected. In

ſhort, he made many ſhuffling and evaſive anſwers; not boldly lying out, which, perhaps, would have ſucceeded, but poorly and vainly endeavouring to reconcile falſehood with truth; an attempt which ſeldom fails to betray the moſt practiſed deceiver.

How impoſſible was it, therefore, for Booth to ſucceed in an art for which nature had ſo entirely diſqualified him! His countenance indeed confeſſed faſter than his tongue denied: and the whole of his behaviour gave Amelia an alarm, and made her ſuſpect ſomething very bad had happened; and as her thoughts turned preſently on the badneſs of their circumſtances, ſhe feared ſome miſchief from his creditors had befallen him; for ſhe was too ignorant of ſuch matters to know, that if he had fallen into the hands of the Philiſtines, (which is the name given by the faithful to bailiffs) he would hardly have been able ſo ſoon to recover his liberty. Booth at laſt perceived her to be uneaſy? and as he ſaw no hopes of contriving any fiction to ſatisfy her, he thought himſelf obliged to tell her the truth, or, at leaſt, part of the truth; and confeſſed that he had had a little ſkirmiſh with Colonel Bath, in which, he ſaid, the colonel had received a ſlight wound, not at all dangerous: 'And this,' ſays he, 'is all the whole 'matter.'------'If it be ſo,' cries Amelia, 'I thank 'Heaven no worſe hath happened; but why, my dear, 'will you ever converſe with that madman, who can 'embrace a friend one moment, and fight with him the 'next?'---'Nay, my dear,' anſwered Booth, 'you 'yourſelf muſt confeſs, though he be a little too much 'on the *qui vive*, he is a man of great honour and 'good-nature.'---'Tell me not,' replied ſhe, 'of ſuch 'good-nature and honour as would ſacrifice a friend, 'and a whole family, to a ridiculous whim.---O Hea-'ven!' cried ſhe, falling upon her knees, 'from what 'miſery have I eſcaped! from what have theſe poor 'babes eſcaped, through your gracious providence this 'day!'-----Then turning to her huſband, ſhe cried, 'But are you ſure the monſter's wound is no more

'dangerous

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R. Corbould del. Printed for C. Cooke, Sattlesoster Row, Oct. 29. 1793. W. Audinet sculp.

'dangerous than you ſay? A monſter ſurely I may call 'him, who can quarrel with a man that could not, 'that I am convinced would not, offend him!'

Upon this queſtion, Booth repeated the aſſurances which the ſurgeon had given them, perhaps with a little enlargement, which pretty well ſatisfied Amelia; and inſtead of blaming her huſband for what he had done, ſhe tenderly embraced him, and again returned thanks to Heaven for his ſafety.

In the evening, Booth inſiſted on paying a ſhort viſit to the colonel, highly againſt the inclination of Amelia; who, by many arguments and entreaties, endeavoured to diſſuade her huſband from continuing an acquaintance, in which, ſhe ſaid, ſhe ſhould always foreſee much danger for the future. However, ſhe was at laſt prevailed upon to acquieſce; and Booth went to the colonel, whoſe lodgings happened to be in the verge, as well as his own.

He found the colonel in his night-gown, and in his great chair, engaged with another officer at a game of cheſs. He roſe immediately; and having heartily embraced Booth, preſented him to his friend, ſaying, he had the honour to introduce to him as brave and as *fortitudinous* a man as any in the king's dominions. He then took Booth with him into the next room, and deſired him not to mention a word of what had happened in the morning: ſaying, 'I am very well ſatisfied that 'no more hath happened: however, as it ended in no-'thing, I could wiſh it might remain a ſecret.' Booth 'told him he was heartily glad to find him ſo well, and promiſed never to mention it more to any one.

The game at cheſs being but juſt begun, and neither of the parties having gained any conſiderable advantage, they neither of them inſiſted on continuing it; and now the colonel's antagoniſt took his leave, and left the colonel and Booth together.

As ſoon as they were alone, the latter earneſtly entreated the former to acquaint him with the real cauſe of his anger; 'For may I periſh,' cries Booth, 'if I can

'even

'even gueſs what I have ever done to offend either you
'or your brother Colonel James!'

'Look'e, child,' cries the colonel, 'I tell you I am
'for my own part ſatisfied: for I am convinced that a
'man who will fight can never be a raſcal? and there-
'fore, why ſhould you enquire any more of me at pre-
'ſent? When I ſee my brother James, I hope to recon-
'cile all matters; and, perhaps, no more ſwords need
'be drawn on this occaſion.' But Booth ſtill perſiſting in his deſire, the colonel, after ſome heſitation, with a moſt tremendous oath, cried out, 'I do not think my-
'ſelf at liberty to refuſe you, after the indignity I
'offered you; ſo, ſince you demand it of me, I will
'inform you. My brother told me you had uſed him
'diſhonorably, and had *divellicated* his character be-
'hind his back. He gave me his word, too, that he
'was well aſſured of what he ſaid. What could I
'have done, though I own to you I did not believe him,
'and your behaviour ſince hath convinced me I was in
'the right? I muſt either have given him the lye, and
'fought with him, or elſe I was obliged to behave as I
'did, and fight with you. And now, my lad, I leave
'it to you to do as you pleaſe; but if you are laid under
'any neceſſity to do yourſelf farther juſtice, it is your
'own fault.'

'Alas, colonel!' anſwered Booth, 'beſides the obli-
'gations I have to the colonel, I have really ſo much
'love for him, that I think of nothing leſs than reſent-
'ment. All I wiſh, is to have this affair brought to
'an eclairciſſement, and to ſatisfy him that he is in an
'error: for though his aſſertions are cruelly injurious,
'and I have never deſerved them; yet I am convinced
'he would not ſay what he did not himſelf think.
'Some raſcal, envious of his friendſhip for me, hath
'belyed me to him; and the only reſentment I deſire,
'is to convince him of his miſtake.'

At theſe words, the colonel grinned horribly a ghaſtly ſmile, or rather ſneer, and anſwered, 'Young gentlman,
'you may do as you pleaſe; but by the eternal dignity

'of

'of man, if any man breathing had taken a liberty 'with my character---here, here---Mr. Booth,' (ſhewing his fingers) 'here, d---n me, ſhould be his noſtrils; 'he ſhould breathe through my hands, and breathe his 'laſt, d---n me!'

Booth anſwered, 'I think, colonel, I may appeal 'to your teſtimony that I dare do myſelf juſtice; ſince 'he who dare draw his ſword againſt you, can hardly 'be ſuppoſed to fear any other perſon; but I repeat to 'you again that I love Colonel James ſo well, and am 'ſo greatly obliged to him, that it would be almoſt in-'different to me, whether I directed my ſword againſt 'his breaſt, or my own.'

The colonel's muſcles were conſiderably ſoftened by Booth's laſt ſpeech; but he again contracted them into a vaſt degree of fierceneſs, before he cried out, 'Boy, 'thou haſt reaſon enough to be vain; for thou art the 'firſt perſon that ever could proudly ſay, he gained an 'advantage over me in combat. I believe, indeed, 'thou art not afraid of any man breathing; and, as 'I know thou haſt ſome obligations to my brother, I 'do not diſcommend thee; for nothing more becomes 'the dignity of a man than gratitude. Beſides as I am 'ſatisfied my brother can produce the author of the 'ſlander---I ſay, I am ſatisfied of that; d---n me, if 'any man alive dares aſſert the contrary, for that 'would be to make my brother himſelf a lyar----I will 'make him produce his author; and then, my dear 'boy, your doing yourſelf proper juſtice there will 'bring you finely out of the whole affair. As ſoon as 'my ſurgeon gives me leave to go abroad, which, I 'hope, will be in a few days, I will bring my brother 'James to a tavern, where you ſhall meet us; and I 'will engage my honour, my whole dignity to you, to 'make you friends.'

This aſſurance of the colonel gave Booth great pleaſure; for few perſons ever loved a friend better than he did James: and as for doing military juſtice on the author of that ſcandalous report which had incenſed his friend

friend againſt him, not Bath himſelf was ever more ready on ſuch an occaſion, than Booth, to execute it. He ſoon after took his leave, and returned home in high ſpirits to his Amelia, whom he found in Mrs. Elliſon's apartment, engaged in a party at ombre with that lady and her right honourable couſin.

His lordſhip had, it ſeems, had a ſecond interview with the great man, and having obtained farther hopes (for I think there was not yet an abſolute promiſe) of ſucceſs in Mr. Booth's affairs, his uſual good-nature brought him immediately to acquaint Mr. Booth with it. As he did not therefore find him at home, and as he met with the two ladies together, he reſolved to ſtay till his friend's return, which he was aſſured would not be long, eſpecially as he was ſo lucky, he ſaid, to have no particular engagement that whole evening.

We remarked before, that his lordſhip, at the firſt interview with Amelia, had diſtinguiſhed her by a more particular addreſs from the other ladies; but that now appeared to be rather owing to his perfect good-breeding, as ſhe was then to be conſidered as the miſtreſs of the houſe, than from any other preference. His preſent behaviour made this ſtill more manifeſt; for as he was now in Mrs. Elliſon's apartment, though ſhe was his relation and old acquaintance, he applied his converſation rather more to her than to Amelia. His eyes, indeed, were now and then guilty of the contrary diſtinction, but this was only by ſtealth; for they conſtantly withdrew the moment they were diſcovered. In ſhort, he treated Amelia with the greateſt diſtance, and at the ſame time with the moſt profound and awful reſpect; his converſation was ſo general, ſo lively, and ſo obliging, that Amelia, when ſhe added to his agreeableneſs the obligations ſhe had to him for his friendſhip to Booth, was certainly as much pleaſed with his lordſhip, as any virtuous woman can poſſibly be with any man beſides her own huſband.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Containing various Matters.

WE have already mentioned the good-humour in which Booth returned home; and the reader will eaſily believe it was not a little increaſed by the good-humour in which he found his company. My lord received him with the utmoſt marks of friendſhip and affection, and told him that his affairs went on as well almoſt as he himſelf could deſire, and that he doubted not very ſoon to wiſh him joy of a company.

When Booth had made a proper return to all his lordſhip's unparalleled goodneſs, he whiſpered Amelia that the colonel was entirely out of danger, and almoſt as well as himſelf. This made her ſatisfaction compleat, threw her into ſuch ſpirits, and gave ſuch a luſtre to her eyes, that her face, as Horace ſays, was too dazzling to be looked at; it was certainly too handſome to be looked at without the higheſt admiration.

His lordſhip departed about ten o'clock, and left the company in raptures with him; eſpecially the two ladies, of whom it is difficult to ſay which exceeded the other in his commendations. Mrs. Elliſon ſwore ſhe believed he was the beſt of all human kind; and Amelia, without making any exception, declared he was the fineſt gentleman, and moſt agreeable man, ſhe had ever ſeen in her life; adding it was a great pity he ſhould remain ſingle. 'That's true, indeed,' cries Mrs. Elliſon; 'and I have often lamented it; nay, I 'am aſtoniſhed at it, conſidering the great liking he 'always ſhews for our ſex, and he may certainly have 'the choice of all. The real reaſon, I believe, is his 'fondneſs for his ſiſter's children. I declare, Madam, 'if you was to ſee his behaviour to them, you would 'think they were his own. Indeed, he is vaſtly fond 'of all manner of children!'---'Good creature,' cries 'Amelia; 'if ever he doth me the honour of another 'viſit, I am reſolved I will ſhew him my little things. 'I think, Mrs. Elliſon, as you ſay my lord loves children,

'dren, I may ſay, without vanity, he will not ſee 'many ſuch.'---'No, indeed, will he not,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon; 'and, now I think on't, Madam, I 'wonder at my own ſtupidity, in never making the of- 'fer before: but ſince you put it into my head, if you 'will give me leave, I'll take maſter and miſs to wait 'on my lord's nephew and niece. They are very 'pretty-behaved children; and little maſter and miſs 'will be, I dare ſwear, very happy in their acquain- 'tance: beſides, if my lord himſelf ſhould ſee them, 'I know what will happen, for he is the moſt generous 'of all human beings.'

Amelia very readily accepted the favour which Mrs. Elliſon offered her; but Booth expreſſed ſome reluctance. 'Upon my word, my dear,' ſaid he, with a ſmile, 'this behaviour of ours puts me in mind of the com- 'mon conduct of beggars; who, whenever they re- 'ceive a favour, are ſure to ſend other objects to the 'ſame fountain of charity. Don't we, my dear, re- 'pay our obligations to my lord in the ſame manner, 'by ſending our children a begging to him?'

'O beaſtly!' cries Mrs. Elliſon; 'how could ſuch a 'thought enter your brains!---I proteſt, Madam, I 'begin to grow aſhamed of this huſband of yours.--- 'How can you have ſo vulgar a way of thinking? 'Begging, indeed! The poor dear little things a beg- 'ging! If my lord was capable of ſuch a thought, tho' 'he was my own brother inſtead of my couſin, I 'ſhould ſcorn him too much ever to enter his doors.' ---'O dear Madam,' anſwered Amelia, 'you take 'Mr. Booth too ſeriouſly, when he was only in jeſt; 'and the children ſhall wait upon you whenever you 'pleaſe.'

Though Booth had been a little more in earneſt than Amelia had repreſented him, and was not, perhaps, quite ſo much in the wrong as he was conſidered by Mrs. Elliſon; yet, ſeeing there were two to one againſt him, he wiſely thought proper to recede, and let his ſmile go off with that air of a jeſt which his wife had given it.

Mrs.

Mrs. Elliſon, however, could not let it paſs without paying ſome compliments to Amelia's underſtanding, nor without ſome obſcure reflections upon Booth, with whom ſhe was more offended than the matter required. She was indeed, a woman of moſt profuſe generoſity, and could not bear a thought which ſhe deemed vulgar or ſneaking. She afterwards launched forth the moſt profuſe encomiums on his lordſhip's liberality, and concluded the evening with ſome inſtances which he had given of that virtue, which, if not the nobleſt, is, perhaps, one of the moſt uſeful to ſociety with which great and rich men can be endowed.

The next morning early, Serjeant Atkinſon came to wait on Lieutenant Booth, and deſired to ſpeak with his honour in private; upon which the lieutenant and ſerjeant took a walk together in the Park. Booth expected every minute when the ſerjeant would open his mouth, under which expectation he continued till he came to the end of the Mall, and ſo he might have continued till he came to the end of the world; for though ſeveral words ſtood at the end of the ſerjeant's lips, there they were likely to remain for ever. He was indeed in the condition of a miſer, whom a charitable impulſe hath impelled to draw a few pence to the edge of his pocket, where they are altogether as ſecure as if they were in the bottom: for, as the one hath not the heart to part with a farthing, ſo neither had the other the heart to ſpeak a word.

Booth at length, wondering that the ſerjeant did not ſpeak, aſked him, what his buſineſs was; when the latter, with a ſtammering voice, began the following apology: 'I hope, Sir, your honour will not be angry, 'nor take any thing amiſs of me. I do aſſure you, it 'was not of my ſeeking; nay, I dare not proceed in the 'matter without firſt aſking your leave. Indeed, if I 'had taken any liberties from the goodneſs you have 'been pleaſed to ſhew me, I ſhould look upon myſelf 'as one of the moſt worthleſs and deſpicable of wretches; 'but nothing is farther from my thoughts. I know

'the diſtance which is between us; and becauſe your 'honour has been ſo kind and good as to treat me 'with more familiarity than any other officer ever did, 'if I had been baſe enough to take any freedoms, or 'to encroach upon your honour's goodneſs, I ſhould 'deſerve to be whipt through the regiment. I hope 'therefore, Sir, you will not ſuſpect me of any ſuch 'attempt.'

'What can all this mean, Atkinſon?' cries Booth; 'what mighty matter would you introduce with all 'this previous apology?'

'I am almoſt aſhamed and afraid to mention it,' anſwered the ſerjeant, 'and yet I am ſure your honour 'will believe what I have ſaid, and not think any 'thing owing to my own preſumption; and, at the 'ſame time, I have no reaſon to think you would do 'any thing to ſpoil my fortune in an honeſt way, when 'it is dropt into my lap without my own ſeeking. For 'may I periſh, if it is not all the lady's own goodneſs! 'and I hope in Heaven, with your honour's leave, I 'ſhall live to make her amends for it.' In a word, that we may not detain the reader's curioſity quite ſo long as he did Booth's, he acquainted that gentleman that he had had an offer of marriage from a lady of his acquaintance, to whoſe company he had introduced him, and deſired his permiſſion to accept of it.

Booth muſt have been very dull indeed, if after what the ſerjeant had ſaid, and after what he had heard Mrs. Elliſon ſay, he had wanted any other information concerning the lady. He anſwered him briſkly and chearfully, that he had his free conſent to marry any woman whatever: 'And the greater and richer ſhe is,' added he, 'the more I ſhall be pleaſed with the match. I 'don't enquire who the lady is,' ſaid he, ſmiling; 'but I hope ſhe will make as good a wife, as I am con-'vinced her huſband will deſerve.'

'Your honour hath been always too good to me,' cries Atkinſon; 'but this I promiſe you, I will do all 'in my power to merit the kindneſs ſhe is pleaſed to

'ſhew

'ſhew me. I will be bold to ſay ſhe will marry an 'honeſt man, though he is but a poor one; and ſhe 'ſhall never want any thing which I can give her, or 'do for her, while my name is Joſeph Atkinſon.'

'And ſo her name is a ſecret, Joe; is it?' cries Booth.

Why, Sir, anſwered the ſerjeant, 'I hope your ho-'nour will not inſiſt upon knowing that, as I think 'it would be diſhonourable in me to mention it.'

'Not at all,' replied Booth; 'I am the fartheſt in 'the world from any ſuch deſire. I know thee better 'than to imagine thou wouldſt diſcloſe the name of a 'fair lady.' Booth then ſhook Atkinſon heartily by the hand, and aſſured him earneſtly of the joy he had in his good fortune; for which the good ſerjeant failed not of making all proper acknowledgements; after which they parted, and Booth returned home.

As Mrs. Elliſon opened the door, Booth haſtily ruſhed by; for he had the utmoſt difficulty to prevent laughing in her face. He ran directly up ſtairs, and throwing himſelf into a chair, diſcharged ſuch a fit of laughter as greatly ſurprized, and at firſt almoſt frightened, his wife.

Amelia, it will be ſuppoſed, preſently enquired into the cauſe of this phænomenon; with which Booth, as ſoon as he was able, (for that was not within a few minutes) acquainted her. The news did not affect her in the ſame manner it had affected her huſband; on the contrary, ſhe cried, 'I proteſt I cannot gueſs what 'makes you ſee it in ſo ridiculous a light. I really 'think Mrs. Elliſon hath choſen very well. I am con-'vinced Joe will make her one of the beſt of huſbands; 'and, in my opinion, that is the greateſt bleſſing a 'woman can be poſſeſſed of!'

However, when Mrs. Elliſon came into the room a little while afterwards to fetch the children, Amelia became of a more riſible diſpoſition; eſpecially when the former turning to Booth, who was then preſent, ſaid, 'So, captain, my jantee ſerjeant was very early here

'this morning. I ſcolded my maid heartily for letting 'him wait ſo long in the entry, like a lacquey, when 'ſhe might have ſhewn him into my inner apartment.' At which words, Booth burſt out into a very loud laugh; and Amelia herſelf could no more prevent laughing than ſhe could bluſhing.

'Heyday!' cries Mrs. Elliſon; 'what have I ſaid 'to cauſe all this mirth!' and at the ſame time bluſhed, and looked very ſilly, as is always the caſe with perſons who ſuſpect themſelves to be the objects of laughter, without abſolutely taking what it is which makes them ridiculous.

Booth ſtill continued laughing; but Amelia, compoſing her muſcles, ſaid, 'I aſk your pardon, dear 'Mrs. Elliſon, but Mr. Booth hath been in a ſtrange 'giggling humour all this morning; and I really 'think it is infectious.'

'I aſk your pardon too, Madam,' cries Booth, 'but 'one is ſometimes unaccountably fooliſh.'

'Nay, but ſeriouſly,' ſaid ſhe, 'what is the matter? 'Something I ſaid about the ſerjeant, I believe: but 'you may laugh as much as you pleaſe; I am not 'aſhamed of owning, I think him one of the prettieſt 'fellows I ever ſaw in my life; and, I own, I ſcolded 'my maid for ſuffering him to wait in my entry; and 'where is the mighty ridiculous matter, pray?'

'None at all,' anſwered Booth; 'and I hope the 'next time he will be uſhered into your inner apartment.'

'Why ſhould he not, Sir?' replied ſhe; 'for where-'ever he is uſhered, I am convinced he will behave him-'ſelf as a gentleman ſhould.'

Here Amelia put an end to the diſcourſe, or it might have proceeded to very great lengths: for Booth was of a waggiſh inclination; and Mrs. Elliſon was not a lady of the niceſt delicacy.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

The heroic Behaviour of Colonel Bath.

BOOTH went this morning to pay a ſecond viſit to the colonel, where he found Colonel James. Both the colonel and the lieutenant appeared a little ſhocked at their firſt meeting, but matters were ſoon cleared up; for the former preſently advanced to the latter, ſhook him heartily by the hand, and ſaid, 'Mr. Booth, I am 'aſhamed to ſee you; for I have injured you, and I 'heartily aſk your pardon. I am now perfectly con-'vinced, that what I hinted to my brother, and which 'I find had like to have produced ſuch fatal conſe-'quences, was entirely groundleſs. If you will be 'contented with my aſking your pardon, and ſpare me 'the diſagreeable remembrance of what led me into my 'error, I ſhall eſteem it as the higheſt obligation.'

Booth anſwered, 'As to what regards yourſelf, my 'dear colonel, I am abundantly ſatisfied; but as I am 'convinced ſome raſcal hath been my enemy with you 'in the cruelleſt manner, I hope you will not deny me 'the opportunity of kicking him through the world.'

'By all the dignity of man,' cries Colonel Bath, 'the boy ſpeaks with ſpirit, and his requeſt is reaſon-'able!'

Colonel James heſitated a moment, and then whiſ-pered Booth that he would give him all the ſatisfac-tion imaginable concerning the whole affair, when they were alone together; upon which, Booth addreſſing him-ſelf to Colonel Bath, the diſcourſe turned on other mat-ters during the remainder of the evening, which was but ſhort, and then both went away together, leaving Colonel Bath as well as it was poſſible to expect, more to the ſatisfaction of Booth than of Colonel James, who would not have been diſpleaſed if his wound had been more dangerous: for he was grown ſomewhat weary of a diſpoſition that he rather called captious than heroic, and which, as he every day more and more hated his wife, he apprehended might ſome time or other give him ſome trouble; for Bath was the moſt affectionate

of brothers, and had often ſwore in the preſence of James, that he would eat any man alive who ſhould uſe his ſiſter ill.

Colonel Bath was well ſatisfied that his brother and the lieutenant were gone out with a deſign of tilting; from which he offered not a ſyllable to diſſuade them, as he was convinced it was right, and that Booth could not in honour take, nor the colonel give, any leſs ſatisfaction. When they had been gone, therefore, about half an hour, he rang his bell, to enquire if there was any news of his brother: a queſtion which he repeated every ten minutes, for the ſpace of two hours; when having heard nothing of him, he began to conclude that both were killed on the ſpot.

Whilſt he was in this ſtate of anxiety, his ſiſter came to ſee him; for, notwithſtanding his deſire of keeping it a ſecret, the duel had blazed all over the town. After receiving ſome kind congratulations on his ſafety, and ſome unkind hints concerning the warmth of his temper, the colonel aſked her when ſhe had ſeen her huſband. She anſwered, not that morning. He then communicated to her his ſuſpicions; told her, he was convinced his brother had drawn his ſword that day; and that as neither of them had heard any thing from him, he began to apprehend the worſt that could happen.

Neither Miſs Bellamy nor Mrs. Cibber were ever in a greater conſternation on the ſtage, than now appeared in the countenance of Mrs. James. 'Good heavens! 'brother,' cries ſhe, 'what do you tell me! You 'have frightened me to death. Let your man get me 'a glaſs of water immediately, if you have not a mind 'to ſee me die before your face. When, where, how 'was this quarrel? Why did you not prevent it, if 'you knew of it? Is it not enough to be every day 'tormenting me with hazarding your own life, but muſt 'you bring the life of one who you know muſt be, and 'ought to be, ſo much the deareſt of all to me, into 'danger? Take your ſword, brother, take your ſword, 'and plunge it into my boſom; it would be kinder of

'you,

'you, than to fill it with ſuch dreads and terrors!' Here ſhe ſwallowed the glaſs of water; and then threw herſelf back in her chair, as if ſhe had intended to faint away.

Perhaps, if ſhe had ſo, the colonel would have lent her no aſſiſtance: for ſhe had hurt him more than by ten thouſand ſtabs. He ſat erect in his chair, with his eye-brows knit, his forehead wrinkled, his eyes flaſhing with fire, his teeth grating againſt each other, and breathing horror all around him. In this poſture he ſat for ſome time ſilent, caſting diſdainful looks at his ſiſter. At laſt his voice found its way through a paſſion which had almoſt choaked him, and he cried out, 'Siſter, what have I done to deſerve the opinion you 'expreſs of me? Which of my actions hath made you 'conclude that I am a raſcal and a coward? Look at 'that poor ſword, which never woman yet ſaw but in 'its ſheath; what hath that done to merit your deſire 'that it ſhould be contaminated with the blood of a 'woman?'

'Alas! brother,' cried ſhe, 'I know not what you 'ſay; you are deſirous, I believe, to terrify me out of 'the little ſenſes I have left. What can I have ſaid in 'the agonies of grief, into which you threw me, to 'deſerve this paſſion?'

'What have you ſaid!' anſwered the colonel; 'you 'have ſaid that which if a man had ſpoken, nay, d---n 'me, if he had but hinted that he durſt even think, 'I would have made him eat my ſword: by all the 'dignity of a man, I would have crumbled his ſoul 'into powder! But I conſider that the words were 'ſpoken by a woman, and I am calm again. Conſi-'der, my dear, that you are my ſiſter, and behave 'yourſelf with more ſpirit. I have only mentioned to 'you my ſurmiſe. It may not have happened as I 'ſuſpect; but let what will have happened, you will 'have the comfort that your huſband hath behaved 'himſelf with becoming dignity, and lies in the bed 'of honour.'

'Talk

'Talk not to me of such comfort,' replied the lady; 'it is a loss I cannot survive. But why do I sit here 'lamenting myself; I will go this instant, and know 'the worst of my fate, if my trembling limbs will 'carry me to my coach. Good morrow, dear brother! 'whatever becomes of me, I am glad to find you out 'of danger.' The colonel paid her his proper compliments, and she then left the room; but returned instantly back, saying, 'Brother, I must beg the favour 'of you to let your footman step to my mantua-maker; 'I am sure it is a miracle, in my present distracted 'condition, how it came into my head.' The footman was presently summoned, and Mrs. James delivered him his message, which was to countermand the orders which she had given that very morning, to make her up a new suit of brocade. 'Heaven knows,' says she, 'now, when I can wear brocade, or whether ever 'I shall wear it!' And now having repeated her message with great exactness, lest there should be any mistake, she again lamented her wretched situation, and then departed; leaving the colonel in full expectation of hearing speedy news of the fatal issue of the battle.

But though the reader should entertain the same curiosity, we must be excused from satisfying it till we have first accounted for an incident which we have related in this very chapter, and which we think deserves some solution. The critic, I am convinced, already is apprized, that I mean the friendly behaviour of James to Booth, which, from what we had before recorded, seemed so little to be expected.

It must be remembered, that the anger which the former of these gentlemen had conceived against the latter, arose entirely from the false account given by Miss Matthews of Booth, whom that lady had accused to Colonel James of having as basely as wickedly traduced his character.

Now, of all the ministers of vengeance, there are none with whom the devil deals so treacherously as with those whom he employs in executing the mischievous pur-

purpoſes of an angry miſtreſs; for no ſooner is revenge executed on an offending lover, than it is ſure to be repented; and all the anger which before raged againſt the beloved object, returns with double fury on the head of his aſſaſſin.

Miſs Matthews, therefore, no ſooner heard that Booth was killed, (for ſo was the report at firſt, and by a colonel in the army) than ſhe immediately concluded it to be James. She was extremely ſhocked with the news, and her heart inſtantly began to relent. All the reaſons on which ſhe had founded her love, recurred in the ſtrongeſt and livelieſt colours to her mind, and all the cauſes of her hatred ſunk down and diſappeared; or if the leaſt remembrance of any thing which had diſobliged her remained, her heart became his zealous advocate, and ſoon ſatisfied her that her own fates were more to be blamed than he, and that without being a villain, he could have acted no otherwiſe than he had done.

In this temper of mind, ſhe looked on herſelf as the murderer of an innocent man; and, what to her was much worſe, of the man ſhe had loved, and ſtill did love, with all the violence imaginable. She looked on James as the tool with which ſhe had done this murder; and as it is uſual for people who have raſhly or inadvertently made any animate or inanimate thing the inſtrument of miſchief, to hate the innocent means by which the miſchief was effected; (for this is a ſubtle method which the mind invents to excuſe ourſelves, the laſt objects on whom we would willingly wreak our vengeance;) ſo Miſs Matthews now hated and curſed James as the efficient cauſe of that act which ſhe herſelf had contrived, and laboured to carry into execution.

She ſat down therefore in a furious agitation, little ſhort of madneſs, and wrote the following letter:

" I Hope this will find you in the hands of juſtice, for " the murder of one of the beſt friends that ever " man was bleſſed with. In one ſenſe, indeed, he may " ſeem

" ſeem to have deſerved his fate, by chuſing a fool for
" his friend; for who but a fool would have believed
" what the anger and rage of an injured woman ſug-
" geſted? a ſtory ſo improbable, that I could ſcarce be
" thought in earneſt when I mentioned it.

" Know, then, cruel wretch, that poor Booth loved
" you of all men breathing; and was, I believe, in
" your commendation guilty of as much falſhood, as
" I was in what I told you concerning him.

" If this knowledge makes you miſerable, it is no
" more than you have made the unhappy

F. MATTHEWS."

CHAP. IX.

Being the laſt Chapter of the Fifth Book.

WE ſhall now return to Colonel James and Mr. Booth, who walked together from Colonel Bath's lodging with much more peaceable intention than that gentleman had conjectured, who dreamt of nothing but ſwords, and guns, and implements of war.

The Birdcage Walk, in the Park, was the ſcene appointed by James for unburdening his mind. Thither they came, and there James acquainted Booth with all that which the reader knows already, and gave him the letter which we have inſerted at the end of the laſt chapter.

Booth expreſſed great aſtoniſhment at this relation, not without venting ſome deteſtation of the wickedneſs of Miſs Matthews; upon which James took him up, ſaying, he ought not to ſpeak with ſuch abhorrence of faults which love for him had occaſioned.

'Can you mention love, my dear colonel,' cries Booth, 'and ſuch a woman, in the ſame breath?'

'Yes, faith, can I!' ſays James; 'for the devil 'take me, if I know a more lovely woman in the 'world!' Here he began to deſcribe her whole perſon; but as we cannot inſert all the deſcription, ſo we ſhall omit it all; and concluded with ſaying, 'Curſe me, if 'I don't think her the fineſt creature in the univerſe! 'I would give half my eſtate, Booth, ſhe loved me as 'well as ſhe doth you; though, on ſecond conſidera-

'tion,

'tion, I believe I ſhould repent that bargain; for 'then, very poſſibly, I ſhould not care a farthing for 'her.'

'You will pardon me, dear colonel,' anſwered Booth; 'but to me there appears ſomewhat very ſingu-'lar in your way of thinking. Beauty is indeed the ob-'ject of liking, great qualities of admiration, good 'ones of eſteem; but the devil take me, if I think any 'thing but love to be the object of love.'

'Is there not ſomething too ſelfiſh,' replied James, 'in that opinion? But without conſidering it in that 'light, is it not of all things the moſt inſipid? all oil, 'all ſugar; zounds! it is enough to cloy the ſharp-ſet 'appetite of a parſon. Acids, ſurely, are moſt likely 'to quicken.'

'I do not love reaſoning in allegories,' cries Booth; 'but with regard to love, I declare I never found any 'thing cloying in it. I have lived almoſt alone with 'my wife near three years together, was never tired 'with her company, nor ever wiſhed for any other; 'and, I am ſure, I never taſted any of the acid you 'mention to quicken my appetite.'

'This is all very extraordinary and romantic to me,' anſwered the colonel. 'If I was to be ſhut up three 'years with the ſame woman, which Heaven forbid! 'nothing, I think, could keep me alive, but a temper 'as violent as that of Miſs Matthews. As to love, it 'would make me ſick to death in the twentieth part of 'that time. If I was ſo condemned, let me ſee, what 'would I wiſh the woman to be? I think no one virtue 'will be ſufficient. With the ſpirit of a tigreſs, I 'would have her be a prude, a ſcold, a ſcholar, a cri-'tic, a wit, a politician, and a Jacobite; and then, 'perhaps, eternal oppoſition would keep up our ſpi-'rits; and, wiſhing one another daily at the devil, we 'ſhould make a ſhift to drag on a damnable ſtate of 'life, without much ſpleen or vapours.

'And ſo you do not intend,' cries Booth, 'to break 'with this woman?'

'Not

'Not more than I have already, if I can help it,' anſwered the colonel.

'And you will be reconciled to her?' ſaid Booth.

'Yes, faith! will I, if I can,' anſwered the colonel. 'I hope you have no objection?'

'None, my dear friend,' ſaid Booth, 'unleſs on 'your account.'

'I do believe you,' ſaid the colonel; 'and yet, let 'me tell you, you are a very extraordinary man, not 'to deſire me to quit her on your account. Upon my 'ſoul, I begin to pity the woman, who hath placed 'her affection, perhaps, on the only man in England, 'of your age, who would not return it. But for my 'part, I promiſe you, I like her beyond all other wo-'men; and whilſt that is the caſe, my boy, if her 'mind was as full of iniquity as Pandora's box was 'of diſeaſes, I'd hug her cloſe in my arms, and only 'take as much care as poſſible to keep the lid down, for 'fear of miſchief. But come, dear Booth,' ſaid he, 'let us conſider your affairs, for I am aſhamed of hav-'ing neglected them ſo long; and the only anger I 'have againſt this wench is, that ſhe was the occaſion 'of it.'

Booth then acquainted the colonel with the promiſes he had received from the noble lord: upon which James ſhook him by the hand, and heartily wiſhed him joy, crying, 'I do aſſure you, if you have his intereſt, you 'will need no other; I did not know you was ac-'quainted with him.'

To which Mr. Booth anſwered, that he was but a new acquaintance, and that he was recommended to him by a lady.

'A lady!' cries the colonel: 'Well, I don't aſk 'her name. You are a happy man, Booth, amongſt 'the women; and I aſſure you, you could have no 'ſtronger recommendation. The peer loves the la-'dies, I believe, as well as ever Mark Antony did; 'and it is not his fault, if he hath not ſpent as much

'upon

'much upon them. If he once fixes his eyes upon a 'woman, he will ſtick at nothing to get her.'

'Ay, indeed!' cries Booth: 'Is that his character?'

'Ay, faith!' anſwered the colonel, 'and the cha-'racter of moſt men beſides him. Few of them, I mean, 'will ſtick at any thing beſide their money. *Juſqu'a la* '*bourſe* is ſometimes the boundary of love, as well as 'friendſhip. And, indeed, I never knew any other 'man part with his money ſo very freely on theſe oc-'caſions. You ſee, dear Booth, the confidence I have 'in your honour.'

'I hope, indeed, you have,' cries Booth; 'but I 'don't ſee what inſtance you now give me of that con-'fidence.'

'Have not I ſhewn you,' anſwered James, 'where 'you may carry your goods to market?' I can aſſure 'you, my friend, that is a ſecret I would not impart 'to every man in your ſituation, and all circumſtances 'conſidered.'

'I am very ſorry, Sir,' cries Booth, very gravely, and turning as pale as death, 'you ſhould entertain a 'thought of this kind---a thought which hath almoſt 'frozen up my blood! I am unwilling to believe there 'are ſuch villains in the world; but there is none of 'them whom I ſhould deteſt half ſo much as myſelf 'if my own mind had ever ſuggeſted to me a hint of 'that kind. I have taſted of ſome diſtreſſes of life, and 'I know not to what greater I may be driven; but 'my honour, I thank Heaven, is in my own power; 'and I can boldly ſay to Fortune, ſhe ſhall not rob me 'of it.'

'Have I not expreſſed that confidence, my dear 'Booth?' anſwered the colonel. 'And what you ſay 'now well juſtifies my opinion; for I do agree with 'you, that, conſidering all things, it would be the 'higheſt inſtance of diſhonour.'

'Diſhonour indeed!' returned Booth. What, to 'proſtitute my wife!- Can I think there is ſuch a 'wretch breathing?'

'I don't know that,' ſaid the colonel; 'but I am 'ſure it was very far from my intention to inſinuate 'the leaſt hint of any ſuch matter to you. Nor can I 'imagine how you yourſelf could conceive ſuch a 'thought. The goods I meant were no other than the 'charming perſon of Miſs Matthews; for whom, I am 'convinced, my lord would bid a ſwinging price 'againſt me.'

Booth's countenance greatly cleared up at this declaration; and he anſwered, with a ſmile, that he hoped he need not give the colonel any aſſurances on that head. However, though he was ſatisfied with regard to the colonel's ſuſpicions, yet ſome chimeras now aroſe in his brain, which gave him no very agreeable ſenſations. What theſe were, the ſagacious reader may probably ſuſpect; but if he ſhould not, we may, perhaps, have occaſion to open them in the ſequel. Here we will put an end to this dialogue, and to the fifth book of this hiſtory.

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

Panegyric on Beauty, with other grave Matters.

THE colonel and Booth walked together to the latter's lodging; for as it was not that day in the week in which all parts of the town are indifferent, Booth could not wait on the colonel.

When they arrived in Spring Garden, Booth, to his great ſurprize, found no one at home but the maid. In truth, Amelia had accompanied Mrs. Elliſon and her children to his lordſhip's; for as her little girl ſhewed a great unwillingneſs to go without her, the fond mother was eaſily perſuaded to make one of the company.

Booth had ſcarce uſhered the colonel up to his apartment, when a ſervant from Mrs. James's knocked haſtily at the door. The lady, not meeting with her huſband at her return home, began to deſpair of him, and performed every thing which was decent on the occaſion.

caſion. An apothecary was preſently called with hartſhorn and ſal volatile, a doctor was ſent for, and meſſengers were diſpatched every way; amongſt the reſt, one was ſent to enquire at the lodgings of his ſuppoſed antagoniſt.

The ſervant, hearing that his maſter was alive and well above ſtairs, ran up eagerly to acquaint him with the dreadful ſituation in which he left his miſerable lady at home, and likewiſe with the occaſion of all her diſtreſs; ſaying, that his lady had been at her brother's, and had there heard that his honour was killed in a duel with Captain Booth.

The colonel ſmiled at this account, and bid the ſervant make haſte back to contradict it. And then, turning to Booth, he ſaid, 'Was there ever ſuch another fellow as this brother of mine? I thought, indeed, his behaviour was ſomewhat odd at the time. I ſuppoſe he overheard me whiſper that I would give you ſatisfaction, and thence concluded we went together with a deſign of tilting. D---n the fellow! I begin to grow heartily ſick of him, and wiſh I could get well rid of him without cutting his throat; which I ſometimes apprehend he will inſiſt on my doing, as a return for my getting him made a lieutenant-colonel.'

Whilſt theſe two gentlemen were commenting on the character of the third, Amelia and her company returned, and all preſently came up ſtairs; not only the children, but the two ladies, laden with trinkets, as if they had been come from a fair. Amelia, who had been highly delighted all the morning with the exceſſive pleaſure which her children enjoyed, when ſhe ſaw Colonel James with her huſband, and perceived the moſt manifeſt marks of that reconciliation which ſhe knew had been ſo long and ſo earneſtly wiſhed by Booth, became ſo tranſported with joy, that her happineſs was ſcarce capable of addition. Exerciſe had painted her face with vermilion; and the higheſt good-humour had ſo ſweetened every feature, and a vaſt flow of ſpirits had ſo lightened up her bright eyes, that ſhe was all a blaze

of beauty. She ſeemed, indeed, as Milton ſublimely deſcribes Eve---

--------adorn'd
With what all earth or heaven could beſtow,
To make her amiable.

Again,

Grace was in all her ſteps, heaven in her eye,
In ev'ry geſture dignity and love.

Or, as Waller ſweetly, though leſs ſublimely, ſings:

Sweetneſs, truth, and every grace,
Which time and uſe are wont to teach,
The eye may in a moment reach,
And read diſtinctly in her face.

Or to mention one poet more, and him of all the ſweeteſt: ſhe ſeemed to be the very perſon of whom Suckling wrote the following lines, where, ſpeaking of Cupid, he ſays,

All his lovely looks, his pleaſing fires,
All his ſweet motions, all his taking ſmiles,
All that awakes, all that inflames deſires,
All that ſweetly commands, all that beguiles,
He does into one pair of eyes convey,
And there begs leave that he himſelf may ſtay.

Such was Amelia at this time when ſhe entered the room; and having paid her reſpects to the colonel, ſhe went up to her huſband, and cried, 'O my dear! ne-'ver were any creatures ſo happy as your little things 'have been this whole morning; and all owing to my 'lord's goodneſs: ſure, never was any thing ſo good-'natured, and ſo generous!' She then made the children produce their preſents, the value of which amounted to a pretty large ſum; for there was a gold watch amongſt the trinkets that coſt above twenty guineas.

Inſtead of diſcovering ſo much ſatisfaction on this occaſion as Amelia expected, Booth very gravely anſwered: 'And pray, my dear, how are we to repay 'all theſe obligations to his lordſhip?'-----'How can 'you aſk ſo ſtrange a queſtion?' cries Mrs. Elliſon: 'how little do you know of the ſoul of generoſity, (for

'ſure

'ſure my couſin deſerves that name) when you call a 'few little trinkets given to children an obligation!'--- 'Indeed, my dear,' cries Amelia, 'I would have 'ſtopped his hand, if it had been poſſible; nay, I was 'forced at laſt abſolutely to refuſe, or I believe he would 'have laid a hundred pounds out on the children; for 'I never ſaw any one ſo fond of children, which con-'vinces me he is one of the beſt of men. But I aſk your 'pardon, colonel,' ſaid ſhe, turning to him, 'I ſhould 'not entertain you with theſe ſubjects; yet I know you 'have goodneſs enough to excuſe the folly of a mother.'

The colonel made a very low aſſenting bow; and ſoon after they all ſat down to a ſmall repaſt; for the colonel had promiſed Booth to dine with him when they firſt came home together; and what he had ſince heard from his own houſe, gave him ſtill leſs inclination than ever to repair thither.

But beſides both theſe, there was a third and ſtronger inducement to him to paſs the day with his friend; and this was the deſire of paſſing it with his friend's wife. When the colonel had firſt ſeen Amelia in France, ſhe was but juſt recovered from a conſumptive habit, and looked pale and thin; beſides, his engagements with Miſs Bath at that time took total poſſeſſion of him, and guarded his heart from the impreſſions of another woman; and when he had dined with her in town, the vexations through which ſhe had lately paſſed, had ſomewhat deadened her beauty: beſides, he was then engaged, as we have ſeen, in a very warm purſuit of a new miſtreſs: but now he had no ſuch impediment; for though the reader hath juſt before ſeen his warm declarations of a paſſion for Miſs Matthews, yet it may be remembered that he had been in poſſeſſion of her for above a fortnight; and one of the happy properties of this kind of paſſion is, that it can with equal violence love half a dozen, or half a ſcore, different objects, at one and the ſame time.

But, indeed, ſuch were the charms now diſplayed by Amelia, of which we have endeavoured above to

draw ſome faint reſemblance, that perhaps no other beauty could have ſecured him from their influence; and here, to confeſs a truth in his favour, however the grave, or rather the hypocritical part of mankind may cenſure it, I am firmly perſuaded, that to withdraw admiration from exquiſite beauty, or to feel no delight in gazing at it, is as impoſſible, as to feel no warmth from the moſt ſcorching rays of the ſun. To run away is all that is in our power: and yet in the former caſe, if it muſt be allowed we have the power of running away, it muſt be allowed alſo, that it requires the ſtrongeſt reſolution to execute it; for when, as Dryden ſays,

All Paradiſe is opened in a face,

how natural is the deſire of going thither! and how difficult to quit the lovely proſpect!

And yet, however difficult this may be, my young readers, it is abſolutely neceſſary, and that immediately too: flatter not yourſelves that fire will not ſcorch as well as warm; and the longer we ſtay within its reach, the more we ſhall burn. The admiration of a beautiful woman, though the wife of our deareſt friend, may at firſt perhaps be innocent; but let us not flatter ourſelves it will always remain ſo: deſire is ſure to ſucceed: and wiſhes, hopes, deſigns, with a long train of miſchiefs, tread cloſe at our heels. In affairs of this kind, we may moſt properly apply the well-known remark of *nemo repentè fuit turpiſſimus*. It fares indeed with us on this occaſion, as with the unwary traveller in ſome part of Arabia the Deſart, whom the treacherous ſands imperceptibly betray, till he is overwhelmed and loſt. In both caſes, the only ſafety is by withdrawing our feet the very firſt moment we perceive them ſliding.

This digreſſion may appear impertinent to ſome readers; we could not, however, avoid the opportunity of offering the above hints; ſince of all paſſions there is none againſt which we ſhould ſo ſtrongly fortify ourſelves as this, which is generally called love: for no other lays before us, eſpecially in the tumultuous days

of

of youth, ſuch ſweet, ſuch ſtrong, and almoſt irreſiſtible temptations; none hath produced in private life ſuch fatal and lamentable tragedies; and, what is worſt of all, there is none to whoſe poiſon and infatuation the beſt of minds are ſo liable. Ambition ſcarce ever produces any evil, but when it reigns in cruel and ſavage boſoms; and avarice ſeldom flouriſhes at all but in the baſeſt and pooreſt ſoil. Love, on the contrary, ſprouts uſually up in the richeſt and nobleſt minds; but there, unleſs nicely watched, pruned, and cultivated, and carefully kept clear of thoſe vicious weeds which are too apt to ſurround it, it branches forth into wildneſs and diſorder, produces nothing deſirable, but choaks up and kills whatever is good and noble in the mind where it ſo abounds. In ſhort, to drop the allegory, not only tenderneſs and good-nature, but bravery, generoſity, and every virtue, are often made the inſtruments of effecting the moſt atrocious purpoſes of this all all-ſubduing tyrant.

CHAP. II.

Which will not appear, we preſume, unnatural to all married Readers.

IF the table of poor Booth afforded but an indifferent repaſt to the colonel's hunger, here was moſt excellent entertainment of a much higher kind. The colonel began now to wonder within himſelf at his not having before diſcovered ſuch incomparable beauty and excellence. This wonder was indeed ſo natural, that leſt it ſhould ariſe likewiſe in the reader, we thought proper to give the ſolution of it in the preceding chapter.

During the firſt two hours, the colonel ſcarce ever had his eyes off from Amelia; for he was taken by ſurprize, and his heart was gone before he ſuſpected himſelf to be in any danger. His mind, however, no ſooner ſuggeſted a certain ſecret to him, than it ſuggeſted ſome degree of prudence to him at the ſame time; and the knowledge that he had thoughts to conceal, and the care of concealing them, had birth at one

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and the ſame inſtant. During the reſidue of the day, therefore, he grew more circumſpect, and contented himſelf with now and then ſtealing a look by chance, eſpecially as the more than ordinary gravity of Booth made him fear that his former behaviour had betrayed to Booth's obſervation the great and ſudden liking he had conceived for his wife, even before he had obſerved it in himſelf.

Amelia continued the whole day in the higheſt ſpirits and higheſt good-humour imaginable; never once remarking that appearance of diſcontent in her huſband, of which the colonel had taken notice; ſo much more quick-ſighted, as we have ſomewhere elſe hinted, is guilt than innocence! Whether Booth had in reality made any ſuch obſervations on the colonel's behaviour as he had ſuſpected, we will not undertake to determine; yet ſo far may be material to ſay, as we can with ſufficient certainty, that the change in Booth's behaviour that day, from what was uſual with him, was remarkable enough. None of his former vivacity appeared in his converſation; and his countenance was altered from being the picture of ſweetneſs and good-humour, not indeed to ſourneſs or moroſeneſs, but to gravity and melancholy.

Though the colonel's ſuſpicion had the effect which we have mentioned on his behaviour, yet it could not perſuade him to depart. In ſhort, he ſat in his chair as if confined to it by enchantment, ſtealing looks now then, and humouring his growing paſſion, without having command enough over his limbs to carry him out of the room, till decency at laſt forced him to put an end to his prepoſterous viſit. When the huſband and wife were left alone together, the latter reſumed the ſubject of her children, and gave Booth a particular narrative of all that had paſſed at his lordſhip's, which he, though ſomething had certainly diſconcerted him, affected to receive with all the pleaſure he could; and this affectation, however aukwardly he acted his part, paſſed very well on Amelia: for ſhe could not well conceive

ceive a diſpleaſure, of which ſhe had not the leaſt hint of any cauſe; and indeed at a time when, from his reconciliation with James, ſhe imagined her huſband to be entirely and perfectly happy.

The greateſt part of that night Booth paſſed awake; and if during the reſidue he might be ſaid to ſleep, he could ſcarce be ſaid to enjoy repoſe; his eyes were no ſooner cloſed, than he was purſued and haunted by the moſt frightful and terrifying dreams, which threw him into ſo reſtleſs a condition, that he ſoon diſturbed his Amelia, and greatly alarmed her with apprehenſions that he had been ſeized by ſome dreadful diſeaſe; though he had not the leaſt ſymptoms of a fever by any extraordinary heat, or any other indication, but was rather colder than uſual.

As Booth aſſured his wife that he was very well, but found no inclination to ſleep, ſhe likewiſe bid adieu to her ſlumbers, and attempted to entertain him with her converſation; upon which his lordſhip occurred as the firſt topic; and ſhe repeated to him all the ſtories which ſhe had heard from Mrs. Elliſon, of the peer's goodneſs to his ſiſter, and his nephew and niece. 'It is impoſ-'ſible, my dear,' ſays ſhe, 'to deſcribe their fondneſs 'for their uncle, which is to me an inconteſtible ſign 'of a parent's goodneſs.' In this manner ſhe ran on for ſeveral minutes; concluding at laſt, that it was a pity ſo very few had ſuch generous minds joined to immenſe fortunes.

Booth, inſtead of making a direct anſwer to what Amelia had ſaid, cried coldly, 'But do you think, my 'dear, it was right to accept all thoſe expenſive toys 'which the children brought home? And I aſk you 'again, what return are we to make for theſe obli-'gations?'

'Indeed, my dear,' cries Amelia, 'you ſee this mat-'ter in too ſerious a light. Though I am the laſt per-'ſon in the world who would leſſen his lordſhip's good-'neſs, (indeed I ſhall always think we are both infi-'nitely obliged to him) yet ſure you muſt allow the

'ex-

'expence to be a mere trifle to such a vast fortune. As 'for return, his own benevolence, in the satisfaction it 'receives, more than repays itself; and I am convinced 'he expects no other.'

'Very well, my dear,' cries Booth, 'you shall have 'it your way: I must confess I never yet saw any rea-'son to blame your discernment; and, perhaps, I have 'been in the wrong, to give myself so much uneasiness 'on this account.'

'Uneasiness, child!' said Amelia eagerly. 'Good 'heavens! hath this made you uneasy?'

'I do own it hath,' answered Booth; 'and it hath 'been the only cause of breaking my repose.'

'Why then I wish,' cries Amelia, 'all the things 'had been at the devil, before ever the children had seen 'them; and whatever I may think myself, I promise you, 'they shall never more accept the value of a farthing. 'If upon this occasion I have been the cause of your 'uneasiness, you will do me the justice to believe that 'I was totally innocent.'

At those words Booth caught her in his arms, and with the tendereſt embrace, emphatically repeating the word innocent, cried, 'Heaven forbid I should think 'otherwise! O thou art the best of creatures that ever 'blessed a man!'

'Well but,' said she smiling, 'do confess, my dear, 'the truth; I promise you, I won't blame you nor dis-'esteem you for it; but is not pride really at the bot-'tom of this fear of an obligation?'

'Perhaps it may,' answered he; or, if you will, you 'may call it fear. I own I am afraid of obligations, 'as the worst kind of debts; for I have generally ob-'served those who confer them, expect to be repaid ten 'thousand fold.'

Here ended all that is material of their discourse; and a little time afterwards, they both fell fast asleep in one another's arms; from which time Booth had no more restlessness, nor any farther perturbation in his dreams.

Their repose, however, had been so much disturbed in

in the former part of the night, that as it was very late before they enjoyed that ſweet ſleep I have juſt mentioned, they lay a-bed the next day till noon, when they both aroſe with the utmoſt chearfulneſs; and while Amelia beſtirred herſelf in the affairs of her family, Booth went to viſit the wounded colonel.

He found that gentleman ſtill proceeding very faſt in his recovery, with which he was more pleaſed than he had reaſon to be with his reception; for the colonel received him very coldly indeed, and when Booth told him he had received perfect ſatisfaction from his brother, Bath erected his head, and anſwered with a ſneer, 'Very well, Sir, if you think theſe matters can be ſo 'made up, d---n me, if it is any buſineſs of mine. 'My dignity hath not been injured.'

'No one, I believe,' cries Booth, 'dares injure it.'

'You believe ſo!' ſaid the colonel; 'I think, Sir, 'you might be aſſured of it; but this, at leaſt, you 'may be aſſured of, that if any man did, I would tum-'ble him down the precipice of hell, d---n me, that 'you may be aſſured of.'

As Booth found the colonel in this diſpoſition, he had no great inclination to lengthen out his viſit, nor did the colonel himſelf ſeem to deſire it; ſo he ſoon returned back to his Amelia, whom he found performing the office of a cook, with as much pleaſure as a fine lady generally enjoys in dreſſing herſelf out for a ball.

CHAP. III.

In which the Hiſtory looks a little backwards.

BEFORE we proceed farther in our hiſtory, we ſhall recount a ſhort ſcene to our reader, which paſſed between Amelia and Mrs. Elliſon whilſt Booth was on his viſit to Colonel Bath. We have already obſerved, that Amelia had conceived an extraordinary affection for Mrs. Bennet, which ſtill increaſed every time ſhe ſaw her. She thought ſhe diſcovered ſomething wonderfully good and gentle in her countenance and diſpoſition, and was very deſirous of knowing her whole hiſtory.

She

She had a very ſhort interview with that lady this morning in Mrs. Elliſon's apartment. As ſoon, therefore, as Mrs. Bennet was gone, Amelia acquainted Mrs. Elliſon with the good opinion ſhe had of her friend, and likewiſe with her curioſity to know her ſtory: 'For there muſt be ſomething uncommonly 'good,' ſaid ſhe, 'in one who can ſo truly mourn for 'a huſband above three years after his death.'

'O,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'to be ſure the world muſt 'allow her to have been one of the beſt of wives. And 'indeeed, upon the whole, ſhe is a good ſort of wo-'man; and what I like her the beſt for, is a ſtrong 'reſemblance that ſhe bears to yourſelf in the form of 'her perſon, and ſtill more in her voice. For my own 'part, I know nothing remarkable in her fortune, un-'leſs what I have told you; that ſhe was the daughter 'of a clergyman, had little or or no fortune, and mar-'ried a poor parſon for love, who left her in the utmoſt 'diſtreſs. If you pleaſe, I will ſhew you a letter 'which ſhe writ to me at that time, though I inſiſt 'upon your promiſe never to mention it to her; in-'deed you will be the firſt perſon I ever ſhewed it to.' She then opened her ſcrutoire, and taking out the letter, delivered it to Amelia, ſaying, 'There, Madam, 'is, I believe, as fine a picture of diſtreſs as can well 'be drawn.'

"DEAR MADAM,

"AS I have no other friend on earth but yourſelf, I "hope you will pardon my writing to you at "this ſeaſon; though I do not know that you can re-"lieve my diſtreſſes, or if you can, have I any pre-"tence to expect that you ſhould. My poor dear, O "heavens!---my-----lies dead in the houſe, and after "I had procured ſufficient to bury him, a ſet of ruf-"fians have entered my houſe, ſeized all I have, have "ſeized his dear, dear corpſe, and threaten to deny it "burial. For Heaven's ſake, ſend me, at leaſt, ſome "advice; little Tommy ſtands now by me crying for "bread, which I have not to give him. I can ſay

"no

" no more, than that I am your diſtreſſed humble " ſervant,

" M. BENNET.'

Amelia red the letter over twice, and then returning it, with tears in her eyes, aſked how the poor creature could poſſibly get through ſuch diſtreſs.

' You may depend upon it, Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, ' the moment I read this account, I poſted away ' immediately to the lady. As to the ſeizing the body, ' that I found was a mere bugbear; but all the reſt was ' literally true. I ſent immediately for the ſame gen- ' tleman that I recommended to Mr. Booth, left the ' care of burying the corpſe to him, and brought my ' friend and her little boy immediately away to my own ' houſe, where ſhe remained ſome months in the moſt mi- ' ſerable condition. I then prevailed with her to retire ' into the country, and procured her a lodging with a ' friend at St. Edmund's Bury, the air and gaiety of ' which place by degrees recovered her; and ſhe re- ' turned in about a twelvemonth to town, as well, I ' think, as ſhe is at preſent.'

' I am almoſt afraid to aſk,' cries Amelia, ' and ' yet I long, methinks, to know what is become of the ' poor little boy.'

' He hath been dead,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, ' a little ' more than half a year; and the mother lamented him ' at firſt almoſt as much as ſhe did her huſband; but I ' found it indeed rather an eaſier matter to comfort her, ' though I ſat up with her near a fortnight upon the ' latter occaſion.'

' You are a good creature,' ſaid Amelia, ' and I ' love you dearly.'

' Alas, Madam,' cries ſhe, ' what could I have ' done, if it had not been for the goodneſs of that beſt ' of men, my noble couſin! His lordſhip no ſooner ' heard of the widow's diſtreſs from me, than he imme- ' diately ſettled one hundred and fifty pounds a year ' upon her during her life.'

' Well! how noble, how generous was that!' ſaid

Amelia. 'I declare I begin to love your couſin, Mrs. 'Elliſon.'

'And I declare, if you do,' anſwered ſhe, 'there is 'no love loſt, I verily believe; if you had heard what 'I heard him ſay yeſterday behind your back-----'

'Why, what did he ſay, Mrs. Elliſon?' cries Amelia.

'He ſaid,' anſwered the other, 'that you was the 'fineſt woman his eyes ever beheld. Ah! it is in vain 'to wiſh, and yet I cannot help wiſhing too. O Mrs. 'Booth! if you had been a ſingle woman, I firmly be-'lieve I could have made you the happieſt in the 'world; and I ſincerely think, I never ſaw a woman 'who deſerved it more.'

'I am obliged to you, Madam,' cries Amelia, 'for 'your good opinion; but I really look on myſelf al-'ready as the happieſt woman in the world. Our cir-'cumſtances, it is true, might have been a little more 'fortunate; but, O my dear Mrs. Elliſon, what for-'tune can be put into the balance with ſuch a huſband 'as mine!'

'I am afraid, dear Madam,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon, 'you would not hold the ſcale fairly. I acknowledge, 'indeed, Mr. Booth is a very pretty gentleman; Hea-'ven forbid I ſhould endeavour to leſſen him in your 'opinion! yet, if I was to be brought to confeſſion, I 'could not help ſaying, I ſee where the ſuperiority 'lies, and that the men have more reaſon to envy Mr. 'Booth, than the women have to envy his lady.'

'Nay, I will not bear this,' cries Amelia: 'you 'will forfeit all my love, if you have the leaſt diſre-'ſpectful opinion of my huſband. You do not know 'him, Mrs. Elliſon; he is the beſt, the kindeſt, the 'worthieſt of all his ſex. I have obſerved, indeed, 'once or twice before, that you have taken ſome diſ-'like to him. I cannot conceive for what reaſon. If 'he hath ſaid or done any thing to diſoblige you, I am 'ſure I can juſtly acquit him of deſign. His extreme 'vivacity makes him ſometimes a little too heedleſs;

'but

'but, I am convinced, a more innocent heart, or one 'more void of offence, was never in a human boſom.'

'Nay, if you grow ſerious,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'I 'have done. How is it poſſible you ſhould ſuſpect I 'had taken any diſlike to a man to whom I have always 'ſhewn ſo perfect a regard! But to ſay I think him, 'or almoſt any other man in the world worthy of your-'ſelf, is not within my power, with truth. And ſince 'you force the confeſſion from me, I declare, I think 'ſuch beauty, ſuch ſenſe, and ſuch goodneſs united, 'might aſpire without vanity to the arms of any mo-'narch in Europe.'

'Alas! my dear Mrs. Elliſon, 'anſwered Amelia, 'do you think happineſs and a crown ſo cloſely united? 'How many miſerable women have lain in the arms of 'kings! Indeed, Mrs. Elliſon, if I had all the merit 'you compliment me with, I ſhould think it all fully 'rewarded with ſuch as man as, I thank Heaven, hath 'fallen to my lot; nor would I, upon my ſoul, ex-'change that lot with any queen in the univerſe.'

'Well, there are enow of our ſex,' ſaid Mrs. Elli-ſon, 'to keep you in countenance; but I ſhall never 'forget the beginning of a ſong of Mr. Congreve's, 'that my huſband was ſo fond of, that he was always 'ſinging it.

"Love's but a frailty of the mind,
"When 'tis not with ambition join'd."

'Love without intereſt makes but an unſavoury diſh, 'in my opinion.'

'And pray how long hath this been your opinion?' ſaid Amelia, ſmiling.

'Ever ſince I was born,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon; 'at leaſt, ever ſince I can remember.'

'And have you never,' ſaid Amelia, 'deviated from 'this generous way of thinking?'

'Never once,' anſwered the other, 'in the whole 'courſe of my life.'

'O Mrs. Elliſon! Mrs. Elliſon!' cries Amelia; 'why do we ever blame thoſe who are diſingenuous in

'confeſſing their faults, when we are ſo often aſhamed 'to own ourſelves in the right? Some women now, in 'my ſituation, would be angry that you had not made 'confidantes of them; but I never deſire to know more 'of the ſecrets of others, than they are pleaſed to en-'truſt me with. You muſt believe, however, that I 'ſhould not have given you theſe hints of my knowing 'all, if I had diſapproved of your choice. On the 'contrary, I aſſure you, I highly approve it. The 'gentility he wants, it will be eaſy in your power to 'procure for him; and as for his good qualities, I will 'myſelf be bound for them: and I make not the leaſt 'doubt, as you have owned to me yourſelf that you 'have placed your affections on him, you will be one 'of the happieſt women in the world.'

'Upon my honour,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, very gravely, 'I do not underſtand one word of what you mean!'

'Upon my honour, you aſtoniſh me,' ſaid Amelia; 'but I have done.'

'Nay then,' ſaid the other, 'I inſiſt upon knowing 'what you mean.'

'Why, what can I mean,' anſwered Amelia, 'but 'your marriage with Serjeant Atkinſon?'

'With Serjeant Atkinſon!' cries Mrs. Elliſon, eagerly: 'my marriage with a ſerjeant!'

'Well, with Mr. Atkinſon then; Captain Atkin-'ſon, if you pleaſe; for ſo I hope to ſee him.'

'And have you really no better opinion of me,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, 'than to imagine me capable of 'ſuch a condeſcenſion? What have I done, dear Mrs. 'Booth, to deſerve ſo low a place in your eſteem? I 'find, indeed, as Solomon ſays, *Women ought to watch 'the door of their lips.* How little did I imagine that a 'little harmleſs freedom in diſcourſe could perſuade any 'one that I could entertain a ſerious intention of diſ-'gracing my family; for of a very good family am I 'come, I aſſure you, Madam, though I now let lodg-'ings. Few of my lodgers, I believe, ever came of a 'better.'

'If

'If I have offended you, Madam,' ſaid Amelia, 'I 'am ſorry, and aſk your pardon; but beſides what I 'heard from yourſelf, Mr. Booth told me.'

'O yes,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon, 'Mr. Booth, I 'know, is a very good friend of mine. Indeed, I 'know you better, than to think it could be your own 'ſuſpicion. I am very much obliged to Mr. Booth, 'truly.'

'Nay,' cries Amelia, 'the ſerjeant himſelf is in 'fault; for Mr. Booth, I am poſitive, only repeated 'what he had from him.'

'Impudent coxcomb!' cries Mrs. Elliſon; 'I ſhall 'know how to keep ſuch fellows at a proper diſtance 'for the future. I will tell you, dear Madam, all that 'happened. When I roſe in the morning, I found 'the fellow waiting in the entry; and, as you had ex-'preſt ſome regard for him as your foſter-brother, (nay, 'he is a very genteel fellow, that I muſt own) I 'ſcolded my maid for not ſhewing him into my little 'back room; and I then aſked him to walk into the 'parlour. Could I have imagined he would have con-'ſtrued ſuch little civility into an encouragement?'

'Nay, I will have juſtice done to my poor brother, 'too,' ſaid Amelia. 'I myſelf have ſeen you give 'him much greater encouragement than that.'

'Well, perhaps I have,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon; 'I 'have always been too unguarded in my ſpeech, and 'cannot anſwer for all I have ſaid.' She then began to change her note, and with an affected laugh turned all into ridicule; and ſoon afterwards the two ladies ſeparated, both in apparent good humour; and Amelia went about thoſe domeſtic offices, in which Mr. Booth found her engaged at the end of the preceding chapter.

CHAP. IV.

Containing a very extraordinary Incident.

IN the afternoon, Mr. Booth, with Amelia and her children, went to refreſh themſelves in the Park. The converſation now turned on what paſſed in the morning with Mrs. Elliſon; the latter part of the dia-

logue, I mean, recorded in the laſt chapter. Amelia told her huſband, that Mrs. Elliſon ſo ſtrongly denied all intentions to marry the ſerjeant, that ſhe had convinced her the poor fellow was under an error, and had miſtaken a little too much levity for ſerious encouragement; and concluded, by deſiring Booth not to jeſt with her any more on that ſubject.

Booth burſt into a laugh at what his wife ſaid. 'My dear creature,' ſaid he, 'how eaſy is thy honeſty 'and ſimplicity to be impoſed on! how little doſt thou 'gueſs at the art and falſhood of women! I knew a 'young lady, who, againſt her father's conſent, was 'married to a brother officer of mine; and as I often 'uſed to walk with her (for I knew her father intimately well), ſhe would of her own accord take frequent occaſions to ridicule and vilify her huſband, (for ſo he was at the time) and expreſt great wonder and indignation at the report which ſhe allowed to prevail, that ſhe ſhould condeſcend ever to look at ſuch a fellow, with any other deſign than of laughing at and deſpiſing him. The marriage afterwards became publicly owned, and the lady was reputably brought to bed: ſince which I have often ſeen her, nor hath ſhe ever appeared to be in the leaſt aſhamed of what ſhe had formerly ſaid; though, indeed, I believe ſhe hates me heartily for having heard it.'

'But for what reaſon,' cries Amelia, 'ſhould ſhe deny 'a fact, when ſhe muſt be ſo certain of our diſcovering it, and that immediately?'

'I cannot anſwer what end ſhe may propoſe,' ſaid Booth. 'Sometimes one would be almoſt perſuaded 'that there was a pleaſure in lying itſelf. But of this 'I am certain, that I would believe the honeſt ſerjeant 'on his bare word, ſooner than I would fifty Mrs. Elliſons on oath. I am convinced he would not have 'ſaid what he did to me, without the ſtrongeſt encouragement; and, I think, after what we have been 'both witneſſes to, it requires no great confidence in his

'his veracity, to give him an unlimited credit with re-
'gard to the lady's behaviour.'

To this Amelia made no reply; and they diſcourſed of other matters during the remainder of a very pleaſant walk.

When they returned home, Amelia was ſurprized to find an appearance of diſorder in her apartment. Several of the trinkets, which his lordſhip had given the children, lay about the room; and a ſuit of her own cloaths, which ſhe had left in her drawers, was now diſplayed upon the bed.

She immediately ſummoned her little girl up ſtairs, who, as ſhe plainly perceived the moment ſhe came up with a candle, had half cried her eyes out; for though the girl had opened the door to them, as it was almoſt dark, ſhe had not taken any notice of this phænomenon in her countenance.

The girl now fell down upon her knees, and cried, 'For Heaven's ſake, Madam, do not be angry with 'me. Indeed, I was left alone in the houſe, and hear-'ing ſomebody knock at the door, I opened it, I am 'ſure, thinking no harm. I did not know but it 'might have been you, or my maſter, or Madam El-'liſon; and immediately as I did, the rogue burſt in, 'and ran directly up ſtairs, and what he hath robbed 'you of I cannot tell; but I am ſure I could not help 'it, for he was a great ſwingeing man, with a piſtol in 'each hand; and if I had dared to call out, to be ſure 'he would have killed me. I am ſure I never was in 'ſuch a fright in my born days, whereof I am hardly 'come to myſelf yet. I believe he is ſomewhere about 'the houſe yet, for I never ſaw him go out.'

Amelia diſcovered ſome little alarm at this narrative, but much leſs than many oth. ladies would have ſhewn; for a fright is, I believe, ſometimes laid hold of as an opportunity of diſcloſing ſeveral charms peculiar to that occaſion; and which, as Mr. Addiſon ſays of certain virtues,

------ſhun

------ ſhun the day, and lie conceal'd,
In the ſmooth ſeaſons and the calms of life.

Booth having opened the window, and ſummoned in two chairmen to his aſſiſtance, proceeded to ſearch the houſe; but all to no purpoſe: the thief was flown, though the poor girl, in her ſtate of terror, had not ſeen him eſcape.

But now a circumſtance appeared which greatly ſurprized both Booth and Amelia; indeed, I believe, it will have the ſame effect on the reader; and this was, that the thief had taken nothing with him. He had, indeed, tumbled over all Booth's and Amelia's clothes, and the children's toys, but had left all behind him.

Amelia was ſcarce more pleaſed than aſtoniſhed at this diſcovery, and re-examined the girl; aſſuring her of an abſolute pardon, if ſhe confeſſed the truth; but grievouſly threatening her if ſhe was found guilty of the leaſt falſhood. 'As for a thief, child,' ſays ſhe, 'that is certainly not true; you have had ſomebody 'with you, to whom you have been ſhewing the things; 'therefore, tell me plainly who it was.'

The girl proteſted in the ſolemneſt manner that ſhe knew not the perſon; but as to ſome circumſtances ſhe began to vary a little from her firſt account, particularly as to the piſtols; concerning which, being ſtrictly examined by Booth, ſhe at laſt cried, 'To be ſure, 'Sir, he muſt have had piſtols about him.' And inſtead of perſiſting in his having ruſhed in upon her, ſhe now confeſſed, that he had aſked at the door for her maſter and miſtreſs; and that at his deſire ſhe had ſhewn him up ſtairs, where he at firſt ſaid he would ſtay till their return home. 'But, indeed,' cried ſhe, 'I 'thought no harm; for he looked like a gentleman-'like ſort of a man. And, indeed, ſo I thought he 'was for a good while, whereof he ſat down and be-'haved himſelf very civilly, till he ſaw ſome of maſter's 'and miſs's things upon the cheſt of drawers; whereof 'he cried, "Heyday! what's here?" and then he fell 'to tumbling about the things like any mad. Then 'I thinks,

'I thinks, thinks I to myſelf, to be ſure he is a high-'wayman, whereof I did not dare to ſpeak to him: for 'I knew Madam Elliſon and her maid was gone out, 'and what could ſuch a poor girl as I do againſt a 'great ſtrong man! And beſides, thinks I, to be ſure 'he hath got piſtols about him, which I cannot in-'deed (that I will not do for the world) take my bible-'oath that I ſaw any; yet to be ſure he would have 'ſoon pulled them out, and ſhot me dead, if I had 'ventured to have ſaid any thing to offend him.'

'I know not what to make of this,' cries Booth. 'The poor girl, I verily believe, ſpeaks to the beſt of 'her knowledge. A thief it could not be; for he 'hath not taken the leaſt thing; and it is plain he had 'the girl's watch in his hand. If it had been a bailiff, 'ſurely he would have ſtaid till our return. I can 'conceive no other from the girl's account, than that 'it muſt have been ſome madman.'

'O good Sir,' ſaid the girl, 'now you mention it, 'if he was not a thief, to be ſure he muſt have been a 'madman; for indeed he looked, and behaved himſelf 'too, very much like a madman: for now I remem-'ber, he talked to himſelf, and ſaid many ſtrange kind 'of words, that I did not underſtand. Indeed, he 'looked altogether as I have ſeen people in Bedlam: 'beſides, if he was not a madman, what good could it 'do him to throw the things all about the room in ſuch 'a manner? And he ſaid ſomething too about my 'maſter, juſt before he went down ſtairs; I was in 'ſuch a fright, I cannot remember particularly; but 'I am ſure they were very ill words: he ſaid he 'would do for him, I am ſure he ſaid that, and 'other wicked bad words too, if I could but think 'of them.'

'Upon my word,' ſaid Booth, 'this is the moſt 'probable conjecture; but ſtill I am puzzled to con-'ceive who it ſhould be: for I have no madman to my 'knowledge of my acquaintance; and it ſeems, as the 'girl ſays, he aſked for me.' He then turned to the child,

child, and asked her if she was certain of that circumstance.

The poor maid, after a little hesitation, answered, 'Indeed, Sir, I cannot be very positive; for the fright 'he threw me into afterwards, drove every thing al-'most out of my mind.'

'Well, whatever he was,' cries Amelia, 'I am glad 'the consequence is no worse; but let this be a warn-'ing to you, little Betty, and teach you to take more 'care for the future. If ever you should be left alone 'in the house again, be sure to let no persons in, with-'out first looking out at the window, and seeing who 'they are. I promised not to chide you any more on 'this occasion, and I will keep my word; but it is 'very plain you desired this person to walk up into 'our apartment, which was very wrong, in our ab-'sence.'

Betty was going to answer, but Amelia would not let her, saying, 'Don't attempt to excuse yourself; for 'I mortally hate a liar, and can forgive any fault 'sooner than falshood.'

The poor girl then submitted; and now Amelia with her assistance began to replace all things in their order; and little Emily hugging her watch with great fondness, declared she would never part with it any more.

Thus ended this odd adventure, not entirely to the satisfaction of Booth: for, besides his curiosity, which, when thoroughly rouzed, is a very troublesome passion, he had, as is, I believe, usual with all persons in his circumstances, several doubts and apprehensions of he knew not what. Indeed, fear is never more uneasy, than when it doth not certainly know it's object: for on such occasions the mind is ever employed in raising a thousand bug-bears and phantoms, much more dreadful than any realities; and like children, when they tell tales of hobgoblins, seems industrious in terrifying itself.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Containing ſome Matters not very unnatural.

MATTERS were ſcarce ſooner reduced into order and decency, than a violent knocking was heard at the door; ſuch indeed as would have perſuaded any one not accuſtomed to the ſound, that the madman was returned in the higheſt ſpring-tide of his fury.

Inſtead, however, of ſo diſagreeable an appearance a very fine lady preſently came into the room, no other indeed than Mrs. James herſelf! for ſhe was reſolved to ſhew Amelia, by the ſpeedy return of her viſit, how unjuſt all her accuſations had been of any failure in the duties of friendſhip: ſhe had moreover another reaſon to accelerate this viſit, and that was, to congratulate her friend on the event of the duel between Colonel Bath and Mr. Booth.

The lady had ſo well profited by Mrs. Booth's remonſtrance, that ſhe had now no more of that ſtiffneſs and formality which ſhe had worn on a former occaſion. On the contrary, ſhe now behaved with the utmoſt freedom and good-humour, and made herſelf ſo very agreeable, that Amelia was highly pleaſed and delighted with her company.

An incident happened during this viſit, that may appear to ſome too inconſiderable in itſelf to be recorded; and yet, as it certainly produced a very ſtrong conſequence in the mind of Mr. Booth, we cannot prevail on ourſelves to paſs it by.

Little Emily, who was preſent in the room while Mrs. James was there, as ſhe ſtood near that lady, happened to be playing with her watch, which ſhe was ſo greatly overjoyed had eſcaped ſafe from the madman. Mrs. James, who expreſt great fondneſs for the child, deſired to ſee the watch, which ſhe commended as the prettieſt of the kind ſhe had ever ſeen.

Amelia caught eager hold of this opportunity to ſpread the praiſes of her benefactor. She preſently acquainted Mrs. James with the donor's name, and ran on with great encomiums on his lordſhip's goodneſs, and particularly

particularly on his generosity. To which Mrs. James answered, 'O certainly, Madam, his lordship hath 'universally the character of being extremely generous '-----where he likes.'

In uttering these words she laid a very strong emphasis on the three last monosyllables, accompanying them at the same time with a very sagacious look, a very significant leer, and a great flirt with her fan.

The greatest genius the world hath ever produced, observes in one of his most excellent plays, that

------Trifles light as air,
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ.

That Mr. Booth began to be possessed by this worst of fiends, admits, I think, no longer doubt; for at this speech of Mrs. James, he immediately turned pale, and from a high degree of chearfulness, was all on a sudden struck dumb, so that he spoke not another word till Mrs. James left the room.

The moment that lady drove from the door, Mrs. Ellison came up stairs. She entered the room with a laugh, and very plentifully raillied both Booth and Amelia concerning the madman, of which she had received a full account below stairs; and at last asked Amelia, if she could not guess who it was; but, without receiving an answer, went on, saying, 'For 'my own part, I fancy it must be some lover of 'yours; some person that hath seen you, and so is run 'mad with love. Indeed, I should not wonder if all 'mankind were to do the same----La! Mr. Booth, 'what makes you grave? why, you are as melancholy 'as if you had been robbed in earnest. Upon my 'word, though, to be serious, it is a strange story; 'and as the girl tells it, I know not what to make of 'it. Perhaps it might be some rogue that intended to 'rob the house, and his heart failed him; yet, even 'that would be very extraordinary.---What, did you 'lose nothing, Madam?' 'Nothing

'Nothing at all,' anſwered Amelia. 'He did not 'even take the child's watch.'

'Well, captain,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'I hope you 'will take more care of the houſe to-morrow; for your 'lady and I ſhall leave you alone to the care of it.--- 'Here, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, 'here is a preſent from my 'lord to us; here are two tickets for the maſquerade at 'Ranelagh. You will be ſo charmed with it------it is 'the ſweeteſt of all diverſions.'

'May I be damned, Madam,' cries Booth, 'if my 'wife ſhall go thither!'

Mrs. Elliſon ſtarted at theſe words; and, indeed, ſo did Amelia, for they were ſpoke with great vehemence. At length the former cried out with an air of aſtoniſhment, 'Not let your lady go to Ranelagh, 'Sir?'

'No, Madam,' cries Booth; 'I will not let my wife go to Ranelagh.'

'You ſurprize me,' cries Mrs. Elliſon. 'Sure you are 'not in earneſt?'

'Indeed, Madam,' returned he, 'I am ſeriouſly in 'earneſt. And what is more, I am convinced ſhe would 'of her own accord refuſe to go.'

'Now, Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, 'you are to an- 'ſwer for yourſelf; and I will for your huſband, that, 'if you have a deſire to go, he will not refuſe you.'

'I hope, Madam,' anſwered Amelia, with great 'gravity, 'I ſhall never deſire to go to any place con- 'trary to Mr. Booth's inclinations.'

'Did ever mortal hear the like!' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon; 'you are enough to ſpoil the beſt huſband in the uni- 'verſe. Inclinations! what, is a woman to be governed 'by her huſband's inclinations, though they are ever ſo 'unreaſonable?'

'Pardon me, Madam,' ſaid Amelia; 'I will not 'ſuppoſe Mr. Booth's inclinations ever can be unrea- 'ſonable. I am very much obliged to you for the 'offer you have made me, but I beg you will not men- 'tion it more; for, after what Mr. Booth hath declared,

'if Ranelagh was a heaven upon earth, I would refuſe 'to go for it.'

'I thank you, my dear,' cries Booth; 'I do aſſure 'you, you oblige me beyond my power of expreſſion 'by what you ſay; but I will endeavour to ſhew you 'both by my ſenſibility of ſuch goodneſs, and my laſt-'ing gratitude to it.'

'And pray, Sir,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'what can 'be your objection to your lady's going to a place, 'which I will venture to ſay is as reputable as any 'about town, and which is frequented by the beſt com-'pany?'

'Pardon me, good Mrs. Elliſon,' ſaid Booth. 'As my wife is ſo good to acquieſce without knowing 'my reaſons, I am not, I think, obliged to aſſign 'them to any other perſon.'

'Well,' cries Mrs. Elliſon, 'if I had been told 'this, I would not have believed it. What, refuſe 'your lady an innocent diverſion; and that too, when 'you have not the pretence to ſay it would coſt you a 'farthing!'

'Why will you ſay any more on this ſubject, dear 'Madam?' cries Amelia. 'All diverſions are to me 'matters of ſuch indifference, that the bare inclina-'tions of any one for whom I have the leaſt value, 'would at all times turn the balance of mine. I am 'ſure, then, after what Mr. Booth hath ſaid--------'

'My dear,' cries he, taking her up haſtily, 'I ſin-'cerely aſk your pardon; I ſpoke inadvertently, and 'in a paſſion; I never once thought of controuling 'you, nor ever would. Nay, I ſaid in the ſame breath, 'you would not go; and, upon my honour, I meant 'nothing more.'

'My dear,' ſaid ſhe, 'you have no need of making 'any apology. I am not in the leaſt offended; and 'am convinced you will never deny me what I deſire.'

'Try him, try him, Madam,' cries Mrs. Elliſon; 'I will be judged by all the women in town, if it is

'poſſible

'poſſible for a wife to aſk her huſband any thing more 'reaſonable. You cannot conceive what a ſweet, 'charming, elegant, delicious place it is. Paradiſe 'itſelf can hardly be equal to it.'

'I beg you will excuſe me, Madam,' ſaid Amelia; 'nay, I entreat you will aſk me no more, for be aſſured 'I muſt and will refuſe. Do let me deſire you to give 'the ticket to poor Mrs. Bennet. I believe it would 'greatly oblige her.'

'Pardon me, Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon. 'If you 'will not accept of it, I am not ſo diſtreſſed for want 'of company to go to ſuch a public place with all 'ſorts of people, neither. I am always very glad to 'ſee Mrs. Bennet at my own houſe, becauſe I look 'upon her as a very good ſort of woman; but I 'don't chuſe to be ſeen with ſuch people in public 'places.'

Amelia expreſt ſome little indignation at this laſt ſpeech, which ſhe declared to be entirely beyond her comprehenſion; and ſoon afterwards Mrs. Elliſon, finding all her efforts to prevail on Amelia were ineffectual, took her leave, giving Mr. Booth two or three ſarcaſtical words, and a much more ſarcaſtical look, at her departure.

CHAP. VI.

A Scene, in which ſome Ladies will poſſibly think Amelia's Conduct exceptionable.

BOOTH and his wife being left alone, a ſolemn ſilence prevailed during a few minutes. At laſt Amelia, who though a good was yet a human creature, ſaid to her huſband, 'Pray, my dear, do inform me 'what could put you into ſo great a paſſion when Mrs. 'Elliſon firſt offered me the ticket for this maſquerade?'

'I had rather you would not aſk me,' ſaid Booth, 'You have obliged me greatly in your ready acqui'eſcence with my deſire, and you will add greatly to 'the obligation by not enquiring the reaſon of it,

'This you may depend upon, Amelia, that your good 'and happineſs are the great objects of all my wiſhes, 'and the end I propoſe in all my actions. This view 'alone could tempt me to refuſe you any thing, or to 'conceal any thing from you.'

'I will appeal to yourſelf,' anſwered ſhe, 'whether 'this be not uſing me too much like a child; and 'whether I can poſſibly help being a little offended at 'it.'

'Not in the leaſt,' replied he. 'I uſe you only 'with the tenderneſs of a friend. I would only endea-'vour to conceal that from you, which I think would 'give you uneaſineſs if you knew. Theſe are called 'the pious frauds of friendſhip.'

'I deteſt all frauds,' ſaid ſhe: 'and pious is too 'good an epithet to be joined to ſo odious a word. You 'have often, you know, tried thoſe frauds with no 'better effect than to teaze and torment me. You 'cannot imagine, my dear, but that I muſt have a vio-'lent deſire to know the reaſon of words which, I own, 'I never expected to have heard. And the more you 'have ſhewn a reluctance to tell me, the more eagerly 'I have longed to know. Nor can this be called a 'vain curioſity, ſince I ſeem ſo much intereſted in this 'affair. If after all this you ſtill inſiſt on keeping the 'ſecret, I will convince you I am not ignorant of the 'duty of a wife, by my obedience; but I cannot help 'telling you at the ſame time, you will make me one 'of the moſt miſerable of women.'

'That is,' cries he, 'in other words, my dear 'Emily, to ſay, I will be contented without the ſecret, 'but I am reſolved to know it nevertheleſs.'

'Nay, if you ſay ſo,' cries ſhe, 'I am convinced 'you will tell me. Poſitively, dear Billy, I muſt and 'will know.'

'Why then poſitively,' ſays Booth, 'I will tell 'you. And I think I ſhall then ſhew you, that how-'ever well you may know the duty of a wife, I am not

'always

'always able to behave like a husband. In a word, 'then, my dear, the secret is no more than this: I am 'unwilling you should receive any more presents from 'my lord.'

'Mercy upon me!' cries she, with all the marks of 'astonishment; 'what a masquerade ticket!'

'Yes, my dear,' cries he; 'that is perhaps the 'very worst and most dangerous of all. Few men 'make presents of those tickets to ladies, without in-'tending to meet them at the place. And what do we 'know of your companion? To be sincere with you, 'I have not liked her behaviour for some time. 'What might be the consequence of going with such 'a woman to such a place, to meet such a person, I 'tremble to think. And now, my dear, I have told 'you my reason of refusing her offer with some little 'vehemence; and, I think, I need explain myself no 'farther.'

'You need not indeed, Sir,' answered she. 'Good 'heavens! did I ever expect to hear this! I can ap-'peal to yourself, Mr. Booth, if I have ever done any 'thing to deserve such a suspicion. If ever any action 'of mine, nay, if ever any thought had stained the in-'nocence of my soul, I could be contented.'

'How cruelly do you mistake me!' said Booth; 'what suspicion have I ever shewn?'

'Can you ask it,' answered she, 'after what you 'have just now declared!'

'If I have declared any suspicion of you,' replied he, 'or if I ever entertained a thought leading that way, 'may the worst of evils that ever afflicted human na-'ture attend me! I know the pure innocence of that 'tender bosom; I do know it, my lovely angel, and 'adore it. The snares which might be laid for that 'innocence were alone the cause of my apprehension. 'I feared what a wicked and voluptuous man, resolved 'to sacrifice every thing to the gratification of a sen-'sual appetite with the most delicious repast, might

'attempt. If ever I injured the unſpotted whiteneſs 'of thy virtue in my imagination, may hell------'

'Do not terrify me,' cries ſhe, interrupting him, 'with ſuch imprecations. O Mr. Booth, Mr. Booth, 'you muſt well know that a woman's virtue is always 'her ſufficient guard. No huſband, without ſuſpect-'ing that, can ſuſpect any danger from thoſe ſnares 'you mention. And why, if you are liable to take 'ſuch things into your head, may not your ſuſpicions 'fall on me, as well as on any other? for ſure nothing 'was ever more unjuſt, I will not ſay ungrateful, 'than the ſuſpicions which you have beſtowed on his 'lordſhip. I do ſolemnly declare, in all the times I 'have ſeen the poor man, he hath never once offered 'the leaſt forwardneſs. His behaviour hath been po-'lite, indeed, but rather remarkably diſtant than 'otherwiſe. Particularly when we played at cards to-'gether, I don't remember he ſpoke ten words to me 'all the evening; and when I was at his houſe, though 'he ſhewed the greateſt fondneſs imaginable to the 'children, he took ſo little notice of me, that a vain 'woman would have been very little pleaſed with him. 'And if he gave them many preſents, he never offered 'me one. The firſt, indeed, which he ever offered me, 'was that which you in that kind manner forced me to 'refuſe.'

'All this may be only the effect of art,' ſaid Booth. 'I am convinced he doth, nay, I am convinced he muſt 'like you; and my good friend James, who perfectly 'well knows the world, told me, that his lordſhip's 'character was that of the moſt profuſe in his pleaſures 'with women; nay, what ſaid Mrs. James this very 'evening? "His lordſhip is extremely generous----- "where he likes."

'I ſhall never forget the ſneer with which ſhe ſpoke 'thoſe laſt words.'

'I am convinced they injure him,' cries Amelia. 'As for Mrs. James, ſhe was always given to be cen-'ſorious; I remarked it in her long ago as her greateſt

'fault,

'fault. And as for the colonel, I believe he may find 'faults enow of this kind in his own boſom, without 'ſearching after them among his neighbours. I am 'ſure he hath the moſt impudent look of all the men 'I know; and I ſolemnly declare, the very laſt time 'he was here, he put me out of countenance more than 'once.'

'Colonel James,' anſwered Booth, 'may have his 'faults, very probable. I do not look upon him as a 'ſaint, nor do I believe he deſires I ſhould; but what 'intereſt could he have in abuſing this lord's character 'to me? Or why ſhould I queſtion his truth, when he 'aſſured me that my lord had never done an act of be-'neficence in his life, but for the ſake of ſome woman 'whom he luſted after?'

'Then I myſelf can confute him,' replied Amelia: 'for beſides his ſervices to you, which, for the future, 'I ſhall wiſh to forget, and his kindneſs to my little 'babes, how inconſiſtent is the character which James 'gives of him, with his lordſhip's behaviour to his 'own nephew and niece, whoſe extreme fondneſs of 'their uncle ſufficiently proclaims his goodneſs to 'them! I need not mention all that I have heard from 'Mrs. Elliſon, every word of which I believe; for I 'have great reaſon to think, notwithſtanding ſome lit-'tle levity, which, to give her her due, ſhe ſees and 'condemns in herſelf, ſhe is a very good ſort of a wo-'man.'

'Well, my dear,' cries Booth, 'I may have been 'deceived, and I heartily hope I am ſo; but in caſes 'of this nature, it is always good to be on the ſureſt 'ſide: for, as Congreve ſays,

"The wiſe too jealous are: fools too ſecure."

Here Amelia burſt into tears; upon which Booth immediately caught her in his arms, and endeavoured to comfort her. Paſſion, however, for a while obſtructed her ſpeech, and at laſt ſhe cried, 'O Mr. Booth, 'can I bear to hear the word Jealouſy from your 'mouth!' 'Why,

'Why, my love,' said Booth, 'will you so fatally 'misunderstand my meaning? How often shall I pro- 'test, that it is not of you, but of him that I was jea- 'lous? If you could look into my breast, and there 'read all the most secret thoughts of my heart, you 'would not see one faint idea to your dishonour.'

'I don't misunderstand you, my dear,' said she, 'so much as I am afraid you misunderstand yourself. 'What is it you fear? You mention not force, but 'snares. Is not this to confess, at least, that you have 'some doubt of my understanding? Do you then really 'imagine me to be so weak as to be cheated of my vir- 'tue? Am I to be deceived into an affection for a man, 'before I perceive the least inward hint of my danger? 'No, Mr. Booth; believe me, a woman must be a fool 'indeed who can have in earnest such an excuse for her 'actions. I have not, I think, any very high opinion 'of my judgment; but so far I shall rely upon it, that 'no man breathing could have any such designs as you 'have apprehended, without my immediately seeing 'them; and how I should then act, I hope my whole 'conduct to you hath sufficiently declared.'

'Well, my dear,' cries Booth, 'I beg you will 'mention it no more; if possible, forget it. I hope, 'nay I believe, I have been in the wrong; pray for- 'give me.'

'I will, I do forgive you, my dear,' said she, 'if 'forgiveness be a proper word for one whom you have 'rather made miserable than angry; but let me entreat 'you to banish for ever all such suspicions from your 'mind. I hope Mrs. Ellison hath not discovered the 'real cause of your passion: but, poor woman! if she 'had, I am convinced it would go no farther. Oh, 'heavens! I would not for the world it should reach 'his lordship's ears. You would lose the best friend 'that ever man had. Nay, I would not for his own 'sake, poor man! for I really believe it would affect 'him greatly; and I must, I cannot help having an 'esteem for so much goodness---an esteem which, by

'this

'this dear hand,' ſaid ſhe, taking Booth's hand and kiſſing it, 'no man alive ſhall ever obtain by making 'love to me.'

Booth caught her in his arms, and tenderly embraced her; after which the reconciliation ſoon became compleat; and Booth, in the contemplation of his happineſs, entirely buried all his jealous thoughts.

CHAP. VII.

A Chapter in which there is much Learning.

THE next morning, whilſt Booth was gone to take his morning-walk, Amelia went down into Mrs. Elliſon's apartment, where though ſhe was received with great civility, yet ſhe found that lady was not at all pleaſed with Mr. Booth; and by ſome hint which dropt from her converſation, Amelia very greatly apprehended that Mrs. Elliſon had too much ſuſpicion of her huſband's real uneaſineſs; for that lady declared very openly, ſhe could not help perceiving what ſort of man Mr. Booth was: 'And though I have the greateſt 'regard for you, Madam, in the world,' ſaid ſhe, 'yet I think myſelf in honour obliged not to impoſe 'on his lordſhip, who, I know very well, hath con-'ceived his greateſt liking to the captain, on my 'telling him he was the beſt huſband in the world.'

Amelia's fears gave her much diſturbance, and when her huſband returned, ſhe acquainted him with them; upon which occaſion, as it was natural, ſhe reſumed a little the topic of their former diſcourſe; nor could ſhe help caſting, though in very gentle terms, ſome ſlight blame on Booth, for having entertained a ſuſpicion, which, ſhe ſaid, might in it's conſequence very poſſibly prove their ruin, and occaſion the loſs of his lordſhip's friendſhip.

Booth became highly affected with what his wife ſaid; and the more, as he had juſt received a note from Colonel James, informing him that the colonel had heard of a vacant company in the regiment which Booth had mentioned to him, and that he had been with his lordſhip about it, who had promiſed to uſe his utmoſt

intere

intereſt to obtain him the command. The poor man now expreſt the utmoſt concern for his yeſterday's behaviour; ſaid, he believed the devil had taken poſſeſſion of him; and concluded with crying out, 'Sure I was 'born, my deareſt creature, to be your torment!'

Amelia no ſooner ſaw her huſband's diſtreſs, than ſhe inſtantly forbore whatever might ſeem likely to aggravate it, and applied herſelf, with all her power, to comfort him. 'If you will give me leave to offer my advice, 'my deareſt ſoul,' ſaid ſhe, 'I think all might yet be 'remedied. I think you know me too well, to ſuſpect 'that the deſire of diverſion ſhould induce me to men'tion what I am now going to propoſe. And in that 'confidence, I will aſk you to let me accept my lord's 'and Mrs. Elliſon's offer, and to go to the maſquerade. 'No matter how little while I ſtay there: if you deſire 'it, I will not be an hour from you. I can make an 'hundred excuſes to come home, or tell a real truth, 'and ſay I am tired with the place. The bare going 'will cure every thing.'

Amelia had no ſooner done ſpeaking, than Booth immediately approved her advice, and readily gave his conſent. He could not, however, help ſaying, that the ſhorter her ſtay was there, the more agreeable it would be to him: 'for you know, my dear,' ſaid he, 'I would never willingly be a moment out of your 'ſight.'

In the afternoon Amelia ſent to invite Mrs. Elliſon to a diſh of tea, and Booth undertook to laugh off all that had paſt yeſterday; in which attempt, the abundant good-humour of that lady gave him great hopes of ſucceſs.

Mrs. Bennet came that afternoon to make a viſit, and was almoſt an hour with Booth and Amelia, before the entry of Mrs. Elliſon.

Mr. Booth had hitherto rather diſliked this young lady, and had wondered at the pleaſure which Amelia declared ſhe took in her company. This afternoon, however, he changed his opinion, and liked her

almoſt

almoſt as much as his wife had done. She did, indeed, behave at this time with more than ordinary gaiety; and good-humour gave a glow to her countenance that ſet off her features, which were very pretty, to the beſt advantage, and leſſened the deadneſs that had uſually appeared in her complexion.

But if Booth was now pleaſed with Mrs. Bennet, Amelia was ſtill more pleaſed with her than ever; for when their diſcourſe turned on love, Amelia diſcovered that her new friend had all the ſame ſentiments on that ſubject with herſelf. In the courſe of their converſation, Booth gave Mrs. Bennet a hint of wiſhing her a good huſband; upon which, both the ladies declaimed againſt ſecond marriages with equal vehemence.

Upon this occaſion, Booth and his wife diſcovered a talent in their viſitant, to which they had been before entirely ſtrangers, and for which they both greatly admired her; and this was, that the lady was a good ſcholar, in which indeed ſhe had the advantage of poor Amelia, whoſe reading was confined to Engliſh plays and poetry; beſides which, I think, ſhe had converſed only with the divinity of the great and learned Dr. Barrow, and with the hiſtories of the excellent Biſhop Burnet.

Amelia delivered herſelf on the ſubject of ſecond marriages with much eloquence and great good ſenſe; but when Mrs. Bennet came to give her opinion, ſhe ſpoke in the following manner: 'I ſhall not enter into the 'queſtion concerning the legality of bigamy. Our 'laws certainly allow it, and ſo, I think, doth our re-'ligion. We are now debating only on the decency of 'it; and in this light, I own myſelf as ſtrenuous an ad-'vocate againſt it, as any Roman matron would have 'been in thoſe ages of the common wealth, when it 'was held to be infamous. For my own part, how 'great a paradox ſoever my opinion may ſeem, I ſo-'lemnly declare, I ſee but little difference between ha-'ving two huſbands at one time, and at ſeveral times; 'and of this I am very confident, that the ſame degree of

'love

'love for a first husband, which preserves a woman in 'the one case, will preserve her in the other. There 'is one argument which I scarce know how to deliver 'before you, Sir; but---if a woman hath lived with 'her first husband without having children, I think it 'unpardonable in her to carry barrenness into a second 'family. On the contrary, if she hath children by 'her first husband, to give them a second father is still 'more unpardonable.'

'But suppose, Madam,' cries Booth, interrupting her, with a smile, 'she should have had children by her 'first husband, and have lost them?'

'That is a case,' answered she, with a sigh, 'which 'I did not desire to think of; and I must own it the 'most favourable light in which a second marriage can 'be seen. But the Scriptures, as Petrarch observes, 'rather suffer them than commend them; and St. Je-'rome speaks against them with the utmost bitterness.' ---'I remember,' cries Booth, (who was willing either to shew his learning, or to draw out the lady's) 'a very 'wise law of Charondas, the famous lawgiver of Thu-'rium, by which men who married a second time were 'removed from all public councils; for it was scarce 'reasonable to suppose, that he who was so great a 'fool in his own family, should be wise in public affairs. 'And though second marriages were permitted among 'the Romans, yet they were at the same time dis-'couraged; and those Roman widows who refused 'them, were held in high esteem, and honoured with 'what Valerius Maximus calls the Corona Pudicitiæ. 'In the noble family of Camilli, there was not, in many 'ages, a single instance of this, which Martial calls 'adultery:

'*Quæ toties nubit, non nubit; adultera lege est.*'

'True, Sir,' says Mrs. Bennet; and Virgil calls 'this a violation of chastity, and makes Dido speak of 'it with the utmost detestation;

'*Sed mihi vel Tellus optem prius ima dehiscat!*
'*Vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras.*
'*Pallentes*

'Pallentes umbras Erebi, noctemque profundam,
'Ante, pudor, quam te violo, aut tua jura resolvo.
'Ille meos, primum qui me sibi junxit, amores,
'Ille habeat semper secum servetque sepulchro.'

She repeated these lines with so strong an emphasis, that she almost frightened Amelia out of her wits, and not a little staggered Booth, who was himself no contemptible scholar. He expressed great admiration of the lady's learning; upon which she said, it was all the fortune given her by her father, and all the dower left her by her husband: 'And sometimes,' said she, 'I 'am inclined to think I enjoy more pleasure from it, 'than if they had bestowed on me what the world 'would in general call more valuable.' She then took occasion, from the surprize which Booth had affected to conceive at her repeating Latin with so good a grace, to comment on that great absurdity (for so she termed it) of excluding women from learning; for which they were equally qualified with the men, and in which so many had made so notable a proficiency; for a proof of which she mentioned Madam Dacier, and many others.

Though both Booth and Amelia outwardly concurred with her sentiments, it may be a question whether they did not assent rather out of complaisance than from their real judgment.

CHAP. VIII.

Containing some unaccountable Behaviour in Mrs. Ellison.

MRS. Ellison made her entrance at the end of the preceeding discourse. At her first appearance she put on an unusual degree of formality and reserve; but when Amelia had acquainted her that she designed to accept the favour intended her, she soon began to alter the gravity of her muscles, and presently fell in with that ridicule which Booth thought proper to throw on his yesterday's behaviour.

The conversation now became very lively and pleasant; in which Booth having mentioned the discourse that passed in the last chapter, and having greatly com-

plimented Mrs. Bennet's ſpeech on that occaſion, Mrs. Elliſon, who was as ſtrenuous an advocate on the other ſide, began to railly that lady extremely, declaring it was a certain ſign ſhe intended to marry again ſoon. 'Married ladies,' cries ſhe, 'I believe, ſometimes 'think themſelves in earneſt in ſuch declarations, 'though they are oftener, perhaps, meant as compli-'ments to their huſbands; but when widows exclaim 'loudly againſt ſecond marriages, I would always lay 'a wager, that the man, if not the wedding-day, is 'abſolutely fixed on.'

Mrs. Bennet made very little anſwer to this ſarcaſm. Indeed, ſhe had ſcarce opened her lips from the time of Mrs. Elliſon's coming into the room, and had grown particularly grave at the mention of the maſquerade. Amelia imputed this to her being left out of the party, a matter which is often no ſmall mortification to human pride; and, in a whiſper, aſked Mrs. Elliſon if ſhe could not procure a third ticket; to which ſhe received an abſolute negative.

During the whole time of Mrs. Bennet's ſtay, which was above an hour afterwards, ſhe remained perfectly ſilent, and looked extremely melancholy. This made Amelia very uneaſy, as ſhe concluded ſhe had gueſſed the cauſe of her vexation; in which opinion ſhe was the more confirmed, from certain looks of no very pleaſant kind which Mrs. Bennet now and then caſt on Mrs. Elliſon, and the more than ordinary concern that appeared in the former lady's countenance, whenever the maſquerade was mentioned, and which unfortunately was the principal topic of their diſcourſe; for Mrs. Elliſon gave a very elaborate deſcription of the extreme beauty of the place, and elegance of the diverſion.

When Mrs. Bennet was departed, Amelia could not help again ſoliciting Mrs. Elliſon for another ticket, declaring ſhe was certain Mrs. Bennet had a great inclination to go with them; but Mrs. Elliſon again excuſed herſelf from aſking it of his lordſhip. 'Beſides, 'Madam, ſays ſhe, 'if I would go thither with Mrs. 'Bennet,

'Bennet, which, I own to you, I don't chuſe, as ſhe 'is a perſon whom *nobody knows*, I very much doubt 'whether ſhe herſelf would like it; for ſhe is a woman 'of a very unaccountable turn. All her delight lies 'in books; and as for public diverſions, I have often 'heard her declare her abhorrence of them.'

'What then,' ſaid Amelia, 'could occaſion all that 'gravity, from the moment the maſquerade was men-'tioned?'

'As to that,' anſwered the other, 'there is no gueſ-'ſing. You have ſeen her altogether as grave before 'now. She hath had theſe fits of gravity at times ever 'ſince the death of her huſband.'

'Poor creature!' cries Amelia; 'I heartily pity 'her; for ſhe muſt certainly ſuffer a great deal on theſe 'occaſions. I declare I have taken a ſtrange fancy to 'her.'

'Perhaps you would not like her ſo well if you 'knew her thoroughly,' anſwered Mrs. Elliſon. 'She 'is, upon the whole, but of a whimſical temper; and, 'if you will take my opinion, you ſhould not cultivate 'too much intimacy with her. I know you will ne-'ver mention what I ſay; but ſhe is like ſome pictures, 'which pleaſe beſt at a diſtance.'

Amelia did not ſeem to agree with theſe ſentiments, and ſhe greatly importuned Mrs. Elliſon to be more explicit, but to no purpoſe: ſhe continued to give only dark hints to Mrs. Bennet's diſadvantage; and if ever ſhe let drop ſomething a little too harſh, ſhe failed not immediately to contradict herſelf, by throwing ſome gentle commendations into the other ſcale; ſo that her conduct appeared utterly unaccountable to Amelia; and, upon the whole, ſhe knew not whether to conclude Mrs. Elliſon to be a friend or enemy to Mrs. Bennet.

During this latter converſation, Booth was not in the room: for he had been ſummoned down ſtairs by the ſerjeant, who came to him with news from Murphy, whom he had met that evening, and who aſſured the

ſerjeant, that if he was deſirous of recovering the debt which he had before pretended to have on Booth, he might ſhortly have an opportunity; for that there was to be a very ſtrong petition to the board the next time they ſat. Murphy ſaid farther, that he need not fear having his money; for that to his certain knowledge the captain had ſeveral things of great value, and even his children had gold watches.

This greatly alarmed Booth; and ſtill more, when the ſerjeant reported to him from Murphy, that all theſe things had been ſeen in his poſſeſſion within a day laſt paſt. He now plainly perceived, as he thought, that Murphy himſelf, or one of his emiſſaries, had been the ſuppoſed madman; and he now very well accounted to himſelf, in his own mind, for all that had happened, conceiving that the deſign was to examine into the ſtate of his effects, and to try whether it was worth his creditors while to plunder him by law.

At his return to his apartment, he communicated what he had heard to Amelia and Mrs. Elliſon, not diſguiſing his apprehenſions of the enemy's intentions; but Mrs. Elliſon endeavoured to laugh him out of his fears, calling him faint-hearted, and aſſuring him he might depend on her lawyer. 'Till you hear from him,' ſaid 'ſhe, 'you may reſt entirely contented; for take my 'word for it, no danger can happen to you, of which 'you will not be timely apprized by him. And as for 'the fellow that had the impudence to come into your 'room, if he was ſent on ſuch an errand as you men-'tion, I heartily wiſh I had been at home; I would have 'ſecured him ſafe with a conſtable, and have carried 'him directly before Juſtice Thraſher. I know the 'juſtice is an enemy to bailiffs on his own account.'

This heartening ſpeech a little rouzed the courage of Booth, and ſomewhat comforted Amelia; though the ſpirits of both had been too much hurried, to ſuffer either of them to give or receive much entertainment that evening; which Mrs. Elliſon perceiving, ſoon took her leave, and left this unhappy couple to ſeek relief

from

from ſleep, that powerful friend to the diſtreſſed; though, like other powerful friends, he is not always ready to give his aſſiſtance to thoſe that want it moſt.

CHAP. IX.

Containing a very ſtrange Incident.

WHEN the huſband and wife were alone, they again talked over the news which the ſerjeant had brought; on which occaſion Amelia did all ſhe could to conceal her own fears, and to quiet thoſe of her huſband. At laſt ſhe turned the converſation to another ſubject, and poor Mrs. Bennet was brought on the carpet. 'I ſhould be ſorry,' cries Amelia, 'to find 'I had conceived an affection for a bad woman; and 'yet I begin to fear Mrs. Elliſon knows ſomething 'of her more than ſhe cares to diſcover; why elſe 'ſhould ſhe be unwilling to be ſeen with her in public? Beſides, I have obſerved that Mrs. Elliſon hath 'been backward to introduce her to me, nor would 'ever bring her to my apartment, though I have often deſired her. Nay, ſhe hath given me frequent hints 'not to cultivate the acquaintance. What do you 'think, my dear? I ſhould be very ſorry to contract an 'intimacy with a wicked perſon.'

'Nay, my dear,' cries Booth, 'I know no more 'of her, nor indeed hardly ſo much as yourſelf. But 'this I think, that if Mrs. Elliſon knows any reaſon 'why ſhe ſhould not have introduced Mrs. Bennet into 'your company, ſhe was very much in the wrong in 'introducing her into it.'

In diſcourſes of this kind they paſt the remainder of the evening. In the morning Booth roſe early, and going down ſtairs, received from little Betty a ſealed note, which contained the following words---

"Beware, beware, beware!
"For I apprehend a dreadful ſnare
"Is laid for virtuous innocence,
"Under a friend's falſe pretence."

Booth immediately enquired of the girl who brought

this note, and was told it came by a chairman, who, having delivered it, departed without saying a word.

He was extremely staggered at what he read, and presently referred the advice to the same affair on which he had received those hints from Atkinson the preceding evening; but when he came to consider the words more maturely, he could not so well reconcile the two last lines of this poetical epistle, if it may be so called, with any danger which the law gave him reason to apprehend. Mr. Murphy and his gang could not be well said to attack his innocence or virtue; nor did they attack him under any colour or pretence of friendship.

After much deliberation on this matter, a very strange suspicion came into his head; and this was, that he was betrayed by Mrs. Ellison. He had for some time conceived no very high opinion of that good gentlewoman, and he now began to suspect that she was bribed to betray him. By this means he thought he could best account for the strange appearance of the supposed madman. And when this conceit once had birth in his mind, several circumstances nourished and improved it. Among these were her jocose behaviour and raillery on that occasion, and her attempt to ridicule his fears from the message which the serjeant had brought him.

This suspicion was indeed preposterous, and not at all warranted by, or even consistent with, the character and whole behaviour of Mrs. Ellison; but it was the only one which at that time suggested itself to his mind, and however blameable it might be, it was certainly not unnatural in him to entertain it: for so great a torment is anxiety to the human mind, that we always endeavour to relieve ourselves from it by guesses, however doubtful or uncertain; on all which occasions, dislike and hatred are the surest guides to lead our suspicion to its object.

When Amelia rose to breakfast, Booth produced the note which he had received, saying, 'My dear, you 'have so often blamed me for keeping secrets from

'you,

'you, and I have ſo often, indeed, endeavoured to 'conceal ſecrets of this kind from you with ſuch ill 'ſucceſs, that I think I ſhall never more attempt it.' Amelia read the letter haſtily, and ſeemed not a little diſcompoſed; then turning to Booth with a very diſconſolate countenance, ſhe ſaid, 'Sure Fortune takes a 'delight in terrifying us! What can be the meaning 'of this?' Then fixing her eyes attentively on the paper, ſhe peruſed it for ſome time, till Booth cried, 'How 'is it poſſible, my Emily, you can read ſuch ſtuff pa'tiently? The verſes are certainly as bad as ever were 'written.'---'I am trying, my dear,' anſwered ſhe, 'to recollect the hand; for I will take my oath I have 'ſeen it before, and that very lately;' and ſuddenly ſhe cried out with great emotion, 'I remember it per'fectly now; it is Mrs. Bennet's hand. Mrs. Elliſon 'ſhewed me a letter from her but a day or two ago. 'It is a very remarkable hand, and I am poſitive it is her's.'

'If it be her's,' cries Booth, 'what can ſhe poſſi'bly mean by the latter part of her caution? Sure, 'Mrs. Elliſon hath no intention to betray us?'

'I know not what ſhe means,' anſwered Amelia; 'but I am reſolved to know immediately, for I am 'certain of the hand. By the greateſt luck in the 'world, ſhe told me yeſterday where her lodgings 'were, when ſhe preſſed me exceedingly to come and 'ſee her. She lives but a very few doors from us, and 'I will go to her this moment.'

Booth made not the leaſt objection to his wife's deſign. His curioſity was indeed as great as her's, and ſo was his impatience to ſatisfy it, though he mentioned not this impatience to Amelia; and perhaps it had been well for him if he had.

Amelia, therefore, preſently equipped herſelf in her walking dreſs, and leaving her children to the care of her huſband, made all poſſible haſte to Mrs. Bennet's lodgings.

Amelia waited near five minutes at Mrs. Bennet's door

door before any one came to open it; at length a maid-ſervant appeared, who being aſked if Mrs. Bennet was at home, anſwered with ſome confuſion in her countenance, that ſhe did not know: 'But, Madam,' ſays ſhe, if you will ſend up your name, I will go and ſee.' Amelia then told her name; and the wench, after ſtaying a conſiderable time, returned and acquainted her that Mrs. Bennet was at home. She was then uſhered into a parlour, and told that the lady would wait on her preſently.

In this parlour Amelia cooled her heels, as the phraſe is, near a quarter of an hour. She ſeemed indeed at this time in the miſerable ſituation of one of thoſe poor wretches who make their morning viſits to the great to ſolicit favours, or perhaps to ſolicit the payment of a debt; for both are alike treated as beggars, and the latter ſometimes conſidered as the more troubleſome beggars of the two.

During her ſtay here, Amelia obſerved the houſe to be in great confuſion; a great buſtle was heard above ſtairs, and the maid ran up and down ſeveral times in a great hurry.

At length Mrs. Bennet herſelf came in. She was greatly diſordered in her looks, and had, as the women call it, huddled on her clothes in much haſte; for in truth, ſhe was in bed when Amelia firſt came. Of this fact ſhe informed her, as the only apology ſhe could make for having cauſed her to wait ſo long for her company.

Amelia very readily accepted her apology, but aſked her with a ſmile, if theſe early hours were uſual with her? Mrs. Bennet turned as red as ſcarlet at the queſtion, and anſwered, 'No, indeed, dear Madam, I am, 'for the moſt part, a very early riſer; but I happened 'accidentally to ſit up very late laſt night. I am ſure, 'I had little expectation of your intending ſuch a fa-'vour this morning.'

Amelia, looking very ſtedfaſtly at her, ſaid, 'Is 'it poſſible, Madam, you ſhould think ſuch a note as

'this

'this would raiſe no curioſity in me?' She then gave her the note, aſking her if ſhe did not know the hand.

Mrs. Bennet appeared in the utmoſt ſurprize and confuſion at this inſtant. Indeed, if Amelia had conceived but the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion before, the behaviour of the lady would have been a ſufficient confirmation to her of the truth. She waited not, therefore, for an anſwer: which, indeed, the other ſeemed in no haſte to give, but conjured her in the moſt earneſt manner to explain to her the meaning of ſo extraordinary an act of friendſhip: 'For ſo,' ſaid ſhe, 'I eſteem it; being 'convinced you muſt have ſufficient reaſon for the 'warning you have given me.'

Mrs. Bennet, after ſome heſitation, anſwered, 'I 'need not, I believe, tell you how much I am ſur-'prized at what you have ſhewn me; and the chief 'reaſon of my ſurprize is, how you came to diſcover 'my hand. Sure, Madam, you have not ſhewn it to 'Mrs. Elliſon.'

Amelia declared ſhe had not, but deſired ſhe would queſtion her no farther. 'What ſignifies how I diſco-'vered it, ſince your hand it certainly is?'

'I own it is,' cries Mrs. Bennet, recovering her ſpirits; 'and ſince you have not ſhewn it to that wo-'man, I am ſatisfied. I begin to gueſs now whence 'you might have your information: but no matter; I 'wiſh I had never done any thing of which I ought to 'be more aſhamed. No one can, I think, juſtly ac-'cuſe me of a crime on that account; and I thank 'Heaven, my ſhame will never be directed by the falſe 'opinion of the world. Perhaps it was wrong to ſhew 'my letter; but when I conſider all circumſtances, I 'can forgive it.'

'Since you have gueſſed the truth,' ſaid Amelia, 'I am not obliged to deny it. She, indeed, ſhewed 'me your letter; but I am ſure you have not the leaſt 'reaſon to be aſhamed of it. On the contrary, your 'behaviour on ſo melancholy an occaſion was highly 'praiſe-worthy; and your bearing up under ſuch afflic-

'tions,

'tions, as the loſs of a huſband in ſo dreadful a ſitu-
'ation, was truly great and heroical.'

'So Mrs. Elliſon, then, hath ſhewn you my letter?' cries Mrs. Bennet, eagerly.

'Why, did not you gueſs it yourſelf?' anſwered Amelia; 'otherwiſe I am ſure I have betrayed my ho-
'nour in mentioning it. I hope you have not drawn
'me inadvertently into any breach of my promiſe.
'Did you not aſſert, and that with an abſolute cer-
'tainty, that you knew ſhe had ſhewn me your letter,
'and that you was not angry with her for ſo doing?'

'I am ſo confuſed,' replied Mrs. Bennet, 'that I
'ſcarce know what I ſay; yes, yes, I remember I did
'ſay ſo. I wiſh I had no greater reaſon to be angry
'with her than that.'

'For Heaven's ſake,' cries Amelia, 'do not delay
'my requeſt any longer. What you ſay now greatly
'increaſes my curioſity; and my mind will be on the
'rack till you diſcover your whole meaning: for I am
'more and more convinced, that ſomething of the ut-
'moſt importance was the purport of your meſſage.'

'Of the utmoſt importance indeed,' cries Mrs. Bennet; 'at leaſt you will own my apprehenſions were
'ſufficiently well founded. O gracious Heaven, how
'happy ſhall I think myſelf, if I ſhould have proved
'your preſervation! I will, indeed, explain my mean-
'ing; but in order to diſcloſe all my fears in their juſt
'colours, I muſt unfold my whole hiſtory to you.
'Can you have patience, Madam, to liſten to the ſtory
'of the moſt unfortunate of women?'

Amelia aſſured her of the higheſt attention; and Mrs. Bennet ſoon after began to relate what is written in the ſeventh book of this hiſtory.

BOOK

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I.

A very ſhort Chapter, and conſequently requiring no Preface.

MRS. Bennet having faſtened the door, and both the ladies having taken their places, ſhe once or twice offered to ſpeak, when paſſion ſtopt her utterance; and after a minute's ſilence, ſhe burſt into a flood of tears; upon which, Amelia expreſſing the utmoſt tenderneſs for her, as well by her look as by her accent, cried, 'What can be the reaſon, dear Madam, of all this 'emotion?'---'O Mrs. Booth,' anſwered ſhe, 'I find 'I have undertaken what I am not able to perform. 'You would not wonder at my emotion, if you knew 'you had an adultereſs and a murderer now ſtanding 'before you.'

Amelia turned as pale as death at theſe words; which Mrs. Bennet obſerving, collected all the force ſhe was able, and a little compoſing her countenance, cried, 'I ſee, Madam, I have terrified you with ſuch dreadful 'words; but I hope you will not think me guilty of 'theſe crimes in the blackeſt degree.'-----'Guilty!' cries Amelia, 'O heavens!'-----'I believe, indeed, 'your candour,' continued Mrs. Bennet, 'will be 'readier to acquit me than I am to acquit myſelf. 'Indiſcretion, at leaſt, the higheſt, moſt unpardonable 'indiſcretion, I ſhall always lay to my own charge; 'and when I reflect on the fatal conſequences, I can 'never, never forgive myſelf.' Here ſhe again began to lament in ſo bitter a manner, that Amelia endeavoured, as much as ſhe could (for ſhe was herſelf greatly ſhocked) to ſoothe and comfort her; telling her, that if indiſcretion was her higheſt crime, the unhappy conſequences made her rather an unfortunate than a guilty perſon; and concluded by ſaying, 'Indeed, Madam, 'you have raiſed my curioſity to the higheſt pitch, and 'I beg you will proceed with your ſtory.'

Mrs.

Mrs. Bennet ſeemed a ſecond time going to begin her relation, when ſhe cried out, 'I would, if poſſible, 'tire you with no more of my unfortunate life, than 'juſt with that part which leads to a cataſtrophe in 'which I think you may yourſelf be intereſted; but I 'proteſt I am at a loſs where to begin.'

'Begin wherever you pleaſe, dear Madam, cries Amelia; 'but I beg you will conſider my impatience.' ----'I do conſider it,' anſwered Mrs. Bennet; 'and 'therefore would begin with that part of my ſtory 'which leads directly to what concerns yourſelf: for 'how, indeed, ſhould my life produce any thing wor-'thy your notice!'---'Do not ſay ſo, Madam,' cries Amelia. 'I aſſure you I have long ſuſpected there 'were ſome very remarkable incidents in your life, and 'have only waited an opportunity to impart to you my 'deſire of hearing them: I beg, therefore, you would 'make no more apologies.'---'I will not, Madam,' cries Mrs. Bennet, and yet I would avoid any thing 'trivial; though, indeed, in ſtories of diſtreſs, eſpe-'cially where love is concerned, many little incidents 'may appear trivial to thoſe who have never felt the 'paſſion, which to delicate minds are the moſt inte-'reſting part of the whole.'---'Nay, but, dear Ma-'dam,' cries Amelia, 'this is all preface.'

'Well, Madam,' anſwered Mrs. Bennet, 'I will 'conſider your impatience.' She then rallied all her ſpirits in the beſt manner ſhe could, and began as is written the next chapter.

And here poſſibly the reader will blame Mrs. Bennet for taking her ſtory ſo far back, and relating ſo much of her life in which Amelia had no concern; but in truth, ſhe was deſirous of inculcating a good opinion of herſelf, from recounting thoſe tranſactions where her conduct was unexceptionable, before ſhe came to the more dangerous and ſuſpicious part of her character. This I really ſuppoſe to have been her intention; for to ſacrifice the time and patience of Amelia, at ſuch a ſeaſon, to the mere love of talking of herſelf,

would

would have been as unpardonable in her, as the bearing it was in Amelia a proof of the moſt perfect good-breeding.

CHAP. II.

The Beginning of Mrs. Bennet's Hiſtory.

'I WAS the younger of two daughters of a clergyman 'in Eſſex; of one in whoſe praiſe if I ſhould indulge 'my fond heart in ſpeaking, I think my invention 'could not outgo the reality. He was, indeed, well 'worthy of the cloth he wore; and that, I think, is 'the higheſt character a man can obtain.

'During the firſt part of my life, even till I reached 'my ſixteenth year, I can recollect nothing to relate to 'you. All was one long ſerene day; in looking back 'upon which, as when we caſt our eyes upon a calm 'ſea, no object ariſes to my view. All appears one 'ſcene of happineſs and tranquillity.

'On the day, then, when I became ſixteen years 'old, muſt I begin my hiſtory; for on that day I 'firſt taſted the bitterneſs of ſorrow.

'My father, beſides thoſe preſcribed by our reli-'gion, kept five feſtivals every year. Theſe were on 'his wedding-day, and on the birth-day of each of his 'little family. On theſe occaſions he uſed to invite 'two or three neighbours to his houſe, and to indulge 'himſelf, as he ſaid, in great exceſs, for ſo he called 'drinking a pint of very ſmall punch; and, indeed, 'it might appear exceſs to one who on other days 'rarely taſted any liquor ſtronger than ſmall-beer.

'Upon my unfortunate birth-day, then, when we 'were all in a high degree of mirth, my mother hav-'ing left the room after dinner, and ſtaying away 'pretty long, my father ſent me to ſee for her. I went 'according to his orders; but though I ſearched the 'whole houſe, and called after her without doors, I 'could neither ſee nor hear her. I was a little alarmed 'at this (though far from ſuſpecting any great miſ-'chief had befallen her) and ran back to acquaint my 'father, who anſwered coolly (for he was a man of the

'calmeſt temper) "Very well, my dear, I ſuppoſe
"ſhe is not gone far, and will be here immediately."
'Half an hour or more paſt after this, when, ſhe not
'returning, my father himſelf expreſſed ſome ſurprize
'at her ſtay; declaring, it muſt be ſome matter of im-
'portance which could detain her at that time from her
'company. His ſurprize now increaſed every minute;
'and he began to grow uneaſy, and to ſhew ſufficient
'ſymptoms of what he felt within. He then diſpatched
'the ſervant maid to enquire after her miſtreſs in the
'pariſh; but waited not her return; for ſhe was ſcarce
'gone out of doors, before he begged leave of his gueſts to
'go himſelf on the ſame errand. The company now broke
'up, and attended my father, all endeavouring to give
'him hopes that no miſchief had happpened. They
'ſearched the whole pariſh, but in vain: they could
'neither ſee my mother, nor hear any news of her.
'My father returned home in a ſtate little ſhort of
'diſtraction. His friends in vain attempted to admi-
'niſter either advice or comfort; he threw himſelf on
'the floor in the moſt bitter agonies of deſpair.

'Whilſt he lay in this condition, my ſiſter and my-
'ſelf lying by him, all equally, I believe, and com-
'pletely miſerable, our old ſervant came into the
'room, and cried out, her mind miſgave her, that ſhe
'knew where her miſtreſs was. Upon theſe words,
'my father ſprung from the floor, and aſked her ea-
'gerly, "Where?" But, Oh! Mrs. Booth, how can
'I deſcribe the particulars of a ſcene to you, the re-
'membrance of which chills my blood with horror, and
'which the agonies of my mind, when it paſt, made all
'all a ſcene of confuſion! The fact, then, in ſhort,
'was this: my mother, who was a moſt indulgent
'miſtreſs to one ſervant, which was all we kept, was
'unwilling, I ſuppoſe, to diſturb her at her dinner;
'and therefore went herſelf to fill her tea-kettle at a
'well, into which, ſtretching herſelf too far, as we ima-
'gine, the water then being very low, ſhe fell with

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'the tea-kettle in her hand. The miſſing this, gave 'the poor old wretch the firſt hint of her ſuſpicion, 'which, upon examination, was found to be too well 'grounded.

'What we all ſuffered on this occaſion may more eaſily be felt than deſcribed.'---'It may indeed,' anſwered Amelia; and I am ſo ſenſible of it, that unleſs 'you have a mind to ſee me faint before your face, I 'beg you will order me ſomething; a glaſs of water, 'if you pleaſe.' Mrs. Bennet immediately complied with her friend's requeſt: a glaſs of water was brought, and ſome hartſhorn drops infuſed into it; which Amelia having drank off, declared ſhe found herſelf much better; and then Mrs. Bennet proceeded thus:

'I will not dwell on a ſcene which I ſee hath already 'ſo much affected your tender heart, and which is as 'diſagreeable to me to relate, as it can be to you to 'hear. I will, therefore, only mention to you the behaviour of my father upon this occaſion, which was 'indeed becoming a philoſopher and a chriſtian divine. 'On the day after my mother's funeral, he ſent for my 'ſiſter and myſelf into his room; where, after many 'careſſes, and every demonſtration of fatherly tenderneſs, as well in ſilence as in words, he began to exhort 'us to bear with patience the great calamity that had 'befallen us; ſaying, that as every human accident, 'how terrible ſoever, muſt happen to us by divine permiſſion at leaſt, a due ſenſe of our duty to our great 'Creator muſt teach us an abſolute ſubmiſſion to his 'will. Not only religion, but common ſenſe, muſt 'teach us this; "for, oh! my dear children," cries 'he, "how vain is all reſiſtance, all repining! Could "tears waſh back again my angel from the grave, I "ſhould drain all the juices of my body through my "eyes; but oh! could we fill up that curſed well with "our tears, how fruitleſs would be all our ſorrow!" 'I think I repeat you his very words; for the impreſſion they made on me is never to be obliterated. He 'then proceeded to comfort us with the chearful

'thought that the loſs was entirely our own, and that 'my mother was greatly a gainer by the accident 'which we lamented. "I have a wife," cries he, "my children, and you have a mother now amongſt "the heavenly choir: how ſelfiſh, therefore, is all our "grief! how cruel to her are all our wiſhes!" In this 'manner he talked to us near half an hour, though I 'muſt frankly own to you, his arguments had not the 'immediate good effect on us which they deſerved; for we 'retired from him very little the better for his exhorta-'tions. However, they became every day more and more 'forcible upon our recollection: indeed, they were 'greatly ſtrengthened by his example; for in this, as in 'all other inſtances, he practiſed the doctrines which he 'taught. From this day he never mentioned my mo-'ther more, and ſoon after recovered his uſual chear-'fulneſs in public; though I have reaſon to think he 'paid many a bitter ſigh in private to that remem-'brance, which neither philoſophy nor chriſtianity could 'expunge.

'My father's advice, enforced by his example, toge-'ther with the kindneſs of ſome of our friends, aſſiſted 'by that ableſt of all the mental phyſicians, Time, in 'a few months pretty well reſtored my tranquillity, 'when Fortune made a ſecond attack on my quiet. 'My ſiſter, whom I dearly loved, and who as warmly 'returned my affection, had fallen into an ill ſtate of 'health ſome time before the fatal accident which I 'have related. She was, indeed, at that time ſo much 'better, that we had great hopes of her perfect reco-'very; but the diſorder of her mind on that dreadful 'occaſion ſo affected her body, that ſhe preſently re-'lapſed into her former declining ſtate, and thence grew 'continually worſe and worſe, till after a decay of near 'ſeven months, ſhe followed my poor mother to the 'grave.

'I will not tire you, dear Madam, with repetitions 'of grief; I will only mention two obſervations which 'have occurred to me from reflections on the two loſſes

'I have

'I have mentioned. The first is, that a mind once violently hurt, grows, as it were, callous to any future impressions of grief; and is never capable of feeling the same pangs a second time. The other observation is, that the arrows of fortune, as well as all others, derive their force from the velocity with which they are discharged; for when they approach you by slow and perceptible degrees, they have but very little power to do you mischief.

'The truth of these observations I experienced, not only in my own heart, but in the behaviour of my father, whose philosophy seemed to gain a complete triumph over this latter calamity.

'Our family was now reduced to two; and my father grew extremely fond of me, as if he had now conferred an entire stock of affection on me, that had before been divided. His words, indeed, testified no less; for he daily called me his only darling, his whole comfort, his all. He committed the whole charge of his house to my care, and gave me the name of his little house-keeper, an appellation of which I was then as proud as any minister of state can be of his titles. But though I was very industrious in the discharge of my occupation, I did not, however, neglect my studies, in which I had made so great a proficiency, that I was become a pretty good mistress of the Latin language, and had made some progress in the Greek. I believe, Madam, I have formerly acquainted you, that learning was the chief estate I inherited of my father, in which he had instructed me from my earliest youth.

'The kindness of this good man had at length wiped off the remembrance of all losses; and I, during two years, led a life of great tranquillity, I think I might almost say, of perfect happiness.

'I was now in the nineteenth year of my age, when my father's good fortune removed us from the county of Essex into Hampshire, where a living was conferred

'on him by one of his old ſchool-fellows, of twice the 'value of what he was before poſſeſſed of.

'His predeceſſor in this new living had died in very 'indifferent circumſtances, and had left behind him a 'widow with two ſmall children. My father, there-'fore, who, with great œconomy, had a moſt generous 'ſoul, bought the whole furniture of the parſonage-'houſe at a very high price: ſome of it, indeed, he 'would have wanted; for though our little habitation 'in Eſſex was moſt completely furniſhed, yet it bore no 'proportion to the largeneſs of that houſe in which he 'was now to dwell.

'His motive, however, to the purchaſe was, I am 'convinced, ſolely generoſity; which appeared ſuffi-'ciently by the price he gave, and may be farther 'inforced by the kindneſs he ſhewed the widow in an-'other inſtance: for he aſſigned her an apartment for 'the uſe of herſelf and her little family; which, he 'told her, ſhe was welcome to enjoy as long as it 'ſuited her conveniency.

'As this widow was very young, and generally 'thought to be tolerably pretty, though I own ſhe 'had a caſt with her eyes which I never liked, my fa-'ther, you may ſuppoſe, acted from a leſs noble prin-'ciple than I have hinted: but I muſt in juſtice acquit 'him; for theſe kind offers were made her before 'ever he had ſeen her face; and I have the greateſt reaſon 'to think, that, for a long time after he had ſeen her, 'he beheld her with much indifference.

'This act of my father's gave me, when I firſt heard 'it, great ſatisfaction; for I may, at leaſt with the 'modeſty of the ancient philoſophers, call myſelf a lo-'ver of generoſity: but when I became acquainted 'with the widow, I was ſtill more delighted with 'what my father had done; for though I could not 'agree with thoſe who thought her a conſummate 'beauty, I muſt allow that ſhe was very fully poſſeſſed 'of the power of making herſelf agreeable; and this 'power ſhe exerted with ſo much ſucceſs, with ſuch

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'indefatigable induſtry to oblige, that within three 'months I became in the higheſt manner pleaſed with 'my new acquaintance, and had contracted the moſt 'ſincere friendſhip for her.

'But if I was ſo pleaſed with the widow, my father 'was, by this time enamoured of her. She had, indeed, 'by the moſt artful conduct in the world, ſo inſinuated 'herſelf into his favour, ſo entirely infatuated him, 'that he never ſhewed the leaſt marks of chearfulneſs 'in her abſence, and could, in truth, ſcarce bear that 'ſhe ſhould be out of his ſight.

'She had managed this matter ſo well, (O ſhe is the 'moſt artful of women!) my father's heart was gone 'before I ever ſuſpected it was in danger. The diſ-'covery, you may eaſily believe, Madam, was not 'pleaſing. The name of a mother-in-law ſounded 'dreadful in my ears, nor could I bear the thought of 'parting again with a ſhare in thoſe dear affections, of 'which I had purchaſed the whole by the loſs of a be-'loved mother and ſiſter.

'In the firſt hurry and diſorder of my mind on this 'occaſion, I committed a crime of the higheſt kind 'againſt all the laws of prudence and diſcretion. I 'took the young lady herſelf very roundly to taſk; 'treated her deſigns on my father as little better than 'a deſign to commit a theft; and in my paſſion, I be-'lieve, ſaid ſhe might be aſhamed to think of marrying 'a man old enough to be her grandfather; for ſo in 'reality he almoſt was.

'The lady on this occaſion acted finely the part of a hypocrite. She affected to be highly affronted at my 'unjuſt ſuſpicions, as ſhe called them, and proceeded 'to ſuch aſſeverations of her innocence, that ſhe almoſt 'brought me to diſcredit the evidence of my own eyes 'and ears.

'My father, however, acted much more honeſtly; 'for he fell the next day into a more violent paſſion with 'me than I had ever ſeen him in before, and aſked me, 'whether I intended to return his paternal fondneſs,

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'by assuming the right of controuling his inclinations: 'with more of the like kind; which fully convinced 'me what had passed between him and the lady, and 'how little I had injured her in my suspicions.

'Hitherto, I frankly own, my aversion to this match 'had been principally on my own account; for I had no 'ill opinion of the woman; though I thought neither 'her circumstances, nor my father's age, promised any 'kind of felicity from such an union: but now I 'learned some particulars, which had not our quarrel 'become publick in the parish, I should, perhaps, have 'never known. In short, I was informed, that this 'gentle, obliging creature, as she had first appeared to 'me, had the spirit of a tigress, and was by many be-'lieved to have broken the heart of her first husband.

'The truth of this matter being confirmed to me 'upon examination, I resolved not to suppress it. On 'this occasion fortune seemed to favour me, by giving 'me a speedy opportunity of seeing my father alone, 'and in good humour. He now first began to open 'his intended marriage, telling me that he had formerly 'had some religious objections to bigamy, but he had 'very fully considered the matter, and had satisfied 'himself of its legality. He then faithfully promised 'me, that no second marriage should in the least im-'pair his affection for me; and concluded with the 'highest eulogiums on the goodness of the widow, pro-'testing that it was her virtues, and not her person, 'with which he was enamoured.

'I now fell upon my knees before him, and bathing 'his hand in my tears, which flowed very plentifully 'from my eyes, acquainted him with all I had heard; 'and was so very imprudent, I might also say so cruel, 'as to disclose the author of my information.

'My father heard me without any indication of pas-'sion; and answered coldly, that if there was any proof 'of such facts, he should decline any farther thoughts 'of this match. "But child," said he, "though I "am far from suspecting the truth of what you tell me,

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"as far as regards your knowledge; yet you know the "inclination of the world to ſlander." 'However, be-'fore we parted, he promiſed to make a proper enquiry 'into what I had told him.---But I aſk your pardon, 'dear Madam; I am running minutely into thoſe par-'ticulars of my life, in which you have not the leaſt 'concern.'

Amelia ſtopped her friend ſhort in her apology; and though, perhaps, ſhe thought her impertinent enough, yet (ſuch was her good breeding) ſhe gave her many aſſurances of a curioſity to know every incident of her life which ſhe could remember. After which, Mrs. Bennet proceeded as in the next chapter.

CHAP. III.

Continuation of Mrs. Bennet's Story.

'I Think, Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Bennet, 'I told you 'my father promiſed me to enquire farther into 'the affair: but he had hardly time to keep his word, 'for we ſeparated pretty late in the evening, and 'early the next morning he was married to the widow.

'But though he gave no credit to my information, 'I had ſufficient reaſon to think he did not forget it, 'by the reſentment which he ſoon diſcovered to both 'the perſons whom I had named as my informers.

'Nor was it long before I had good cauſe to believe 'that my father's new wife was perfectly well ac-'quainted with the good opinion I had of her, not 'only from her uſage of me, but from certain hints 'which ſhe threw forth with an air of triumph. One 'day, particularly, I remember ſhe ſaid to my father, 'upon his mentioning his age---"O, my dear, I hope "you have many years yet to live; unleſs, indeed, "I ſhould be ſo cruel as to break your heart!" She 'ſpoke theſe words, looking me full in the face, and 'accompanied them with a ſneer, in which the higheſt 'malice was viſible, under a thin covering of affected 'pleaſantry.

'I will not entertain you, Madam, with any thing 'ſo common as the cruel uſage of a ſtep-mother; nor of

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'what affected me much more, the unkind behaviour of a 'father under such an influence. It shall suffice only 'to tell you, that I had the mortification to perceive 'the gradual and daily decrease of my father's affec- 'tion. His smiles were converted into frowns; the 'tender appellations of child, and dear, were exchanged 'for plain Molly, that girl, that creature, and some- 'times much harder names. I was at first turned all 'at once into a cypher, and at last seemed to be consi- 'dered as a nuisance in the family.

'Thus altered was the man of whom I gave you 'such a character at the entrance of my story; but, 'alas! he no longer acted from his own excellent dis- 'position; but was in every thing governed and di- 'rected by my mother-in-law. In fact, whenever 'there is great disparity of years between husband and 'wife, the younger is, I believe, always possessed of 'absolute power over the elder: for superstition itself 'is a less firm support of absolute power than dotage.

'But though his wife was so entirely mistress of my 'father's will, that she could make him use me ill, 'she could not so perfectly subdue his understanding, 'as to prevent him from being conscious of such ill 'usage; and from this consciousness he began invete- 'rately to hate me. Of this hatred he gave me num- 'berless instances; and I protest to you, I know not 'any other reason for it than what I have assigned; 'and the cause, as experience hath convinced me, is 'adequate to the effect.

'While I was in this wretched situation, my father's 'unkindness having almost broken my heart, he came 'one day into my room with more anger in his counte- 'nance than I had ever seen; and after bitterly up- 'braiding me with my undutiful behaviour, both to 'himself and his worthy consort, he bid me pack up 'my alls, and immediately prepare to quit his house; 'at the same time gave me a letter, and told me, that 'would acquaint me where I might find a home; adding, 'that he doubted not but I expected, and had indeed

'solicited,

'ſolicited, the invitation; and left me with a declara-
'ration that he would have no ſpies in his family.

'The letter I found, on opening it, was from my
'father's own ſiſter: but before I mention the contents,
'I will give you a ſhort ſketch of her character, as it
'was ſomewhat particular. Her perſonal charms were
'not great, for ſhe was very tall, very thin, and very
'homely. Of the defect of her beauty, ſhe was per-
'haps ſenſible; her vanity, therefore, retreated into
'her mind, where there is no looking glaſs, and conſe-
'quently where we can flatter ourſelves with diſcovering
'almoſt whatever beauties we pleaſe. This is an en-
'couraging circumſtance; and yet I have obſerved,
'dear Mrs. Booth, that few women ever ſeek theſe
'comforts from within, till they are driven to it by
'deſpair of finding any food for their vanity from
'without. Indeed, I believe, the firſt wiſh of our
'whole ſex is to be handſome.'

Here both ladies fixed their eyes on the glaſs, and both ſmiled.

'My aunt, however,' continued Mrs. Bennet,
'from deſpair of gaining any applauſe this way, had
'applied herſelf entirely to the contemplation of her
'underſtanding, and had improved this to ſuch a pitch,
'that at the age of fifty, at which ſhe was now arri-
'ved, ſhe had contracted a hearty contempt for much
'the greater part of both ſexes: for the women, as be-
'ing idiots; and for the men, as the admirers of idiots.
'That word, and fool, were almoſt conſtantly in her
'mouth, and were beſtowed with great liberality
'among all her acquaintance.

'This lady had ſpent one day only at my father's
'houſe in near two years; it was about a month be-
'fore his ſecond marriage. At her departure ſhe took
'occaſion to whiſper me her opinion of the widow,
'whom ſhe called a pretty idiot, and wondered how
'her brother could bear ſuch company under his roof;
'for neither ſhe nor I had, at that time, any ſuſpicion
'of what afterwards happened. 'The

'The letter which my father had just received, and 'which was the first she had sent him since his marri- 'riage, was of such a nature, that I should be unjust if 'I blamed him for being offended; fool and idiot were 'both plentifully bestowed in it, as well on himself, 'as on his wife. But what, perhaps, had principally 'offended him, was that part which related to me; 'for after much panegyrick on my understanding, and 'saying he was unworthy of such a daughter, she 'considered his match, not only as the highest indis- 'cretion, as it related to himself, but as a downright 'act of injustice to me. One expression in it I shall never 'forget. "You have placed," said she, "a woman "above your daughter, who, in understanding, the "only valuable gift in nature, is the lowest in the "whole class of pretty idiots." After much more of 'this kind, it concluded with inviting me to her 'house.

'I can truly say, that when I had read the letter, I 'entirely forgave my father's suspicion, that I had 'made some complaints to my aunt of his behaviour; 'for though I was, indeed, innocent, there was surely 'colour enough to suspect the contrary.

'Though I had never been greatly attached to my 'aunt, nor, indeed, had she formerly given me any 'reason for such an attachment, yet I was well enough 'pleased with her present invitation. To say the truth, 'I led so wretched a life where I then was, that it was 'impossible not to be a gainer by any exchange.

'I could not, however, bear the thoughts of leaving 'my father with an impression on his mind against me 'which I did not deserve. I endeavoured, therefore, 'to remove all his suspicions of my having complained 'to my aunt, by the most earnest asseverations of my 'innocence; but they were all to no purpose. All 'my tears, all my vows, and all my entreaties, were 'fruitless. My new mother, indeed, appeared to be 'my advocate: but she acted her part very poorly; 'and, far from counterfeiting any desire of succeeding

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'in my ſuit, ſhe could not conceal the exceſſive joy 'which ſhe felt on the occaſion.

'Well, Madam, the next day I departed for my 'aunt's; where, after a long journey of forty miles, 'I arrived, without having once broke my faſt on the 'road; for grief is as capable as food of filling the 'ſtomach; and I had too much of the former to admit 'any of the latter. The fatigue of my journey, and 'the agitation of my mind, joined to my faſting, ſo 'overpowered my ſpirits, that when I was taken from 'my horſe, I immediately fainted away in the arms of 'the man who helped me from my ſaddle. My aunt 'expreſſed great aſtoniſhment at ſeeing me in this con-'dition, with my eyes almoſt ſwollen out of my head 'with tears; but my father's letter, which I delivered 'her ſoon after I came to myſelf, pretty well, I believe, 'cured her ſurprize. She often ſmiled with a mixture 'of contempt and anger, while ſhe was reading it; 'and having pronounced her brother to be a fool, ſhe 'turned to me, and with as much affability as poſſible, '(for ſhe is no great miſtreſs of affability) ſaid--- "Don't be uneaſy, dear Molly, for you are come to "the houſe of a friend; of one who hath ſenſe enough "to diſcern the author of all this miſchief: depend "upon it, child, I will, ere long, make ſome people "aſhamed of their folly." This kind reception gave 'me ſome comfort, my aunt aſſuring me, that ſhe 'would convince him how unjuſtly he had accuſed me or 'having made any complaints to her. A paper war 'was now began between theſe two, which not only 'fixed an irreconcileable hatred between them, but 'confirmed my father's diſpleaſure againſt me, and 'in the end, I believe, did me no ſervice with my 'aunt; for I was conſidered by both as the cauſe of 'their diſſenſion; though, in fact, my ſtep-mother, 'who very well knew the affection my aunt had for her, 'had long ſince done her buſineſs with my father; and 'as for my aunt's affection towards him, it had been 'abating ſeveral years, from an apprehenſion that he

'did not pay sufficient deference to her understanding.
'I had lived about half a year with my aunt, when
'I heard of my step-mother's being delivered of a boy,
'and the great joy my father expressed on that oc-
'casion; but, poor man! he lived not long to enjoy
'his happiness, for within a month afterwards I had
'the melancholy news of his death.

'Notwithstanding all the disobligations I had lately
'received from him, I was sincerely afflicted at my
'loss of him. All his kindness to me in my infancy,
'all his kindness to me while I was growing up, re-
'curred to my memory, raised a thousand tender me-
'lancholy ideas, and totally obliterated all thoughts
'of his latter behaviour, for which I made also every
'allowance and every excuse in my power.

'But what may, perhaps, appear more extraordi-
'nary, my aunt began soon to speak of him with
'concern. She said, he had some understanding form-
'erly, though his passion for that vile woman had,
'in a great measure, obscured it; and one day, when
'she was in an ill humour with me, she had the cru-
'elty to throw out a hint, that she had never quar-
'relled with her brother, if it had not been on my
'account.

'My father, during his life, had allowed my aunt
'very handsomely for my board; for generosity was
'too deeply rivetted in his nature to be plucked out
'out by all the power of his wife. So far, however,
'she prevailed, that though he died possessed of up-
'wards of 2000l. he left me no more than 100l. which,
'as he expressed in his will, was to set me up in some
'business, if I had the grace to take to any.

'Hitherto my aunt had in general treated me with
'some degree of affection, but her behaviour began
'now to be changed. She soon took an opportunity
'of giving me to understand, that her fortune was in-
'sufficient to keep me; and, as I could not live on the
'interest of my own, it was high time for me to consi-
'der about going into the world. She added, that her

'brother

'brother having mentioned my ſetting up in ſome 'buſineſs in his will, was very fooliſh; that I had 'been bred to nothing; and beſides, that the ſum was 'too trifling to ſet me up in any way of reputation; ſhe 'deſired me therefore, to think of immediately going 'to ſervice.

'This advice was, perhaps, right enough; and I 'told her I was very ready to do as ſhe directed me, but 'I was at that time in an ill ſtate of health: I deſired 'her, therefore, to let me ſtay with her till my legacy, 'which was not to be paid till a year after my father's 'death, was due; and I then promiſed to ſatisfy her 'for my board, to which ſhe readily conſented.

'And now, Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Bennet, ſighing, 'I am going to open to you thoſe matters which lead 'directly to that great cataſtrophe of my life, which 'hath occaſioned my giving you this trouble, and of 'trying your patience in this manner.'

Amelia, notwithſtanding her impatience, made a very civil anſwer to this; and then Mrs. Bennet proceeded to relate what is written in the next chapter.

CHAP. IV.

Farther Continuation.

'THE curate of the pariſh where my aunt dwelt, 'was a young fellow of about four and twenty. 'He had been left an orphan in his infancy, and en-'tirely unprovided for, when an uncle had the good-'neſs to take care of his education, both at ſchool 'and at the univerſity. As the young gentleman was 'intended for the church, his uncle, though he had 'two daughters of his own, and no very large fortune, 'purchaſed for him the next preſentation of a living of 'near 200l. a year. The incumbent, at the time of 'the purchaſe, was under the age of ſixty, and in ap-'parent good health; notwithſtanding which he died 'ſoon after the bargain, and long before the nephew 'was capable of orders; ſo that the uncle was obliged 'to give the living to a clergyman, to hold it till the 'young man came of proper age.

'The young gentleman had not attained his proper 'age of taking orders, when he had the misfortuue to 'loſe his uncle and only friend; who, thinking he had 'ſufficiently provided for his nephew by the purchaſe 'of the living, conſidered him no farther in his will, 'but divided all the fortune of which he died poſſeſſed 'between his two daughters; recommending it to them, 'however, on his death-bed, to aſſiſt their couſin with 'money ſufficient to keep him at the univerſity till he 'ſhould be capable of ordination.

'But as no appointment of this kind was in the 'will, the young ladies, who received about 2000l. 'each, thought proper to diſregard the laſt words of 'their father: for, beſides that both of them were ex-'tremely tenacious of their money, they were great ene-'mies to their couſin, on account of their father's kind-'neſs to him, and thought proper to let him know that 'they thought he had robbed them of too much al-'ready.

'The poor young fellow was now greatly diſtreſſed, 'for he had yet above a year to ſtay at the univerſity, 'without any viſible means of ſuſtaining himſelf there.

'In this diſtreſs, however, he met with a friend, 'who had the good nature to lend him the ſum of twenty 'pounds, for which he only accepted his bond for 'forty, and which was to be paid within a year after 'his being poſſeſſed of his living; that is, within a 'year after his becoming qualified to hold it.

'With this ſmall ſum, thus hardly obtained, the 'poor gentleman made a ſhift to ſtruggle with all dif-'ficulties, till he became of due age to take upon him-'ſelf the character of a deacon. He then repaired to 'that clergyman to whom his uncle had given the liv-'ing upon the conditions above mentioned, to procure 'a title to ordination; but this, to his great ſurprize 'and mortification, was abſolutely refuſed him.

'The immediate diſappointment did not hurt him 'ſo much as the concluſion he drew from it; for he 'could but have little hopes, that the man who could

'have

'have the cruelty to refuſe him a title, would vouch-
'ſafe afterwards to deliver up to him a living of ſo
'conſiderable a value; nor was it long before this
'worthy incumbent told him plainly, that he valued
'his uncle's favours at too high a rate to part with
'them to any one; nay, he pretended ſcruples of con-
'ſcience, and ſaid, that if he had made any ſlight
'promiſes, which he did not now well remember, they
'were wicked and void; that he looked upon himſelf
'as married to his pariſh, and he could no more give
'it up, than he could give up his wife without ſin.

'The poor young fellow was now obliged to ſeek
'farther for a title, which at length he obtained from
'the rector of the pariſh where my aunt lived.

'He had not long been ſettled in the curacy, before
'an intimate acquaintance grew between him and my
'aunt, for ſhe was a great admirer of the clergy, and
'uſed frequently to ſay, they were the only converſi-
'ble creatures in the country.

'The firſt time ſhe was in this gentleman's company
'was at a neighbour's chriſtening, where ſhe ſtood
'godmother. Here ſhe diſplayed her whole little ſtock
'of knowledge, in order to captivate Mr. Bennet, (I
'ſuppoſe, Madam, you already gueſs that to have been
'his name) and before they parted, gave him a very
'ſtrong invitation to her houſe.

'Not a word paſſed at this chriſtening between Mr.
'Bennet and myſelf; but our eyes were not unem-
'ployed. Here, Madam, I firſt felt a pleaſing kind
'of confuſion, which I know not how to deſcribe. I
'felt a kind of uneaſineſs, yet did not wiſh to be with-
'out it. I longed to be alone, yet dreaded the hour
'of parting. I could not keep my eyes off from the
'object which cauſed my confuſion, and which I was
'at once afraid of, and enamoured with. But why do
'I attempt to deſcribe my ſituation to one who muſt,
'I am ſure, have felt the ſame!'

Amelia ſmiled, and Mrs. Bennet went on thus---
'O Mrs. Booth! had you ſeen the perſon of whom I

'am now ſpeaking, you would not condemn the ſudden-
'neſs of my love. Nay, indeed, I had ſeen him there be-
'fore, though this was the firſt time I had ever heard
'the muſic of his voice. O! it was the ſweeteſt that
'was ever heard.

'Mr. Bennet came to viſit my aunt the very next
'day. She imputed this reſpectful haſte to the power-
'ful charms of her underſtanding, and reſolved to loſe
'no opportunity in improving the opinion which ſhe
'imagined he had conceived of her. She became by
'this deſire quite ridiculous, and ran into abſurdities
'and gallimatias ſcarce credible.

'Mr. Bennet, as I afterwards found, ſaw her in the
'ſame light with myſelf; but as he was a very ſenſi-
'ble and well-bred man, he ſo well concealed his opi-
'nion from us both, that I was almoſt angry, and ſhe
'was pleaſed even to raptures, declaring herſelf charmed
'with his underſtanding; though indeed he had ſaid
'very little; but I believe he heard himſelf into her
'good opinion, while he gazed himſelf into love.

'The two firſt viſits which Mr. Bennet made to my
'aunt, though I was in the room all the time, I never
'ſpoke a word; but on the third, on ſome argument
'which aroſe between them, Mr. Bennet referred him-
'ſelf to me. I took his ſide of the queſtion, as indeed
'I muſt to have done juſtice, and repeated two or three
'words of Latin. My aunt reddened at this, and ex-
'preſſed great diſdain of my opinion, declaring ſhe was
'aſtoniſhed that a man of Mr. Bennet's underſtanding
'could appeal to the judgment of a ſilly girl: "Is
"ſhe," ſaid my aunt, bridling herſelf, "fit to decide
"between us?" Mr. Bennet ſpoke very favourably
'of what I had ſaid; upon which my aunt burſt al-
'moſt into a rage, treated me with downright ſcur-
'rility, called me conceited fool, abuſed my poor
'father for having taught me Latin, which, ſhe ſaid,
'had made me a downright coxcomb, and made me
'prefer myſelf to thoſe who were a hundred times my
'ſuperiors in knowledge. She then fell foul on the

'learned

'learned languages, declared they were totally uſeleſs, 'and concluded that ſhe had read all that was worth 'reading, though ſhe thanked Heaven ſhe underſtood 'no language but her own.

'Before the end of his viſit, Mr. Bennet reconciled 'himſelf very well to my aunt, which, indeed, was 'no difficult taſk for him to accompliſh; but from that 'hour ſhe conceived a hatred and rancour towards me, 'which I could never appeaſe.

'My aunt had, from my firſt coming into her houſe, 'expreſſed great diſlike to my learning. In plain truth, 'ſhe envied me that advantage. This envy I had long 'ago diſcovered, and had taken great pains to ſmother 'it; carefully avoiding ever to mention a Latin word 'in her preſence, and always ſubmitting to her au-'thority; for indeed I deſpiſed her ignorance too much 'to diſpute with her. By theſe means I had pretty 'well ſucceeded, and we lived tolerably together. But 'the affront paid to her underſtanding by Mr. Bennet 'in my favour, was an injury never to be forgiven to 'me. She took me ſeverely to taſk that very even-'ing, and reminded me of going to ſervice in ſuch 'earneſt terms, as almoſt amounted literally to turning 'me out of doors; adviſing me, in the moſt inſulting 'manner, to keep my Latin to myſelf; which, ſhe 'ſaid, was uſeleſs to any one, but ridiculous when 'pretended to by a ſervant.

'The next viſit Mr. Bennet made at our houſe, I 'was not ſuffered to be preſent. This was much the 'ſhorteſt of all his viſits; and when he went away, 'he left my aunt in a worſe humour than ever I had 'ſeen her. The whole was diſcharged on me in the 'uſual manner, by upbraiding me with my learning, 'conceit, and poverty; reminding me of obligations, 'and inſiſting on my going immediately to ſervice. 'With all this I was greatly pleaſed; as it aſſured me, 'that Mr. Bennet had ſaid ſomething to her in my 'favour; and I would have purchaſed a kind expreſ-'ſion of his at almoſt any price.

'I ſhould

'I should scarce, however, have been so sanguine as 'to draw this conclusion, had I not received some hints, 'that I had not unhappily placed my affections on a 'man who made me no return: for though he had scarce 'addressed a dozen sentences to me, (for, indeed, he 'had no opportunity) yet his eyes had revealed certain 'secrets to mine, with which I was not displeased.

'I remained, however, in a state of anxiety near a 'month; sometimes pleasing myself with thinking 'Mr. Bennet's heart was in the same situation with my 'own; sometimes doubting that my wishes had flat-'tered and deceived me; and not in the least question-'ing that my aunt was my rival: for I thought no 'woman could be proof against the charms that had 'subdued me. Indeed, Mrs. Booth, he was a charm-'ing young fellow! I must, I must pay this tribute to 'his memory. O, gracious Heaven, why, why did 'I ever see him! why was I doomed to such misery!' Here she burst into a flood of tears, and remained incapable of speech for some time; during which the gentle Amelia endeavoured all she could to soothe her, and gave sufficient marks of sympathizing in the tender affliction of her friend.

Mrs. Bennet at length recovered her spirits, and proceeded as in the next chapter.

CHAP. V.

The Story of Mrs. Bennet continued.

'I Scarce know where I left off. Oh! I was, I 'think, telling you, that I esteemed my aunt as 'my rival; and it is not easy to conceive a greater de-'gree of detestation than I had for her; and what may, 'perhaps, appear strange, as she daily grew more and 'more civil to me, my hatred increased with her civi-'lity; for I imputed it all to her triumph over me, 'and to her having secured, beyond all apprehension, 'the heart I longed for.

'How was I surprized, when one day, with as much 'good-humour as she was mistress of, (for her counte-'nance was not very pleasing) she asked me how I

'liked

'liked Mr. Bennet. The queſtion, you will believe, 'Madam, threw me into great confuſion; which ſhe 'plainly perceived; and, without waiting for my an-'ſwer, told me, ſhe was very well ſatisfied; for that it 'did not require her diſcernment to read my thoughts 'in my countenance. "Well, child," ſaid ſhe, "I "have ſuſpected this a great while; and I believe it "will pleaſe you to know, that I yeſterday made the "ſame diſcovery in your lover." This I confeſs to 'you, was more than I could well bear, and I begged 'her to ſay no more to me at this time on the ſubject. "Nay, child," anſwered ſhe, "I muſt tell you all, or "I ſhould not act a friendly part: Mr. Bennet, I am "convinced, hath a paſſion for you; but it is a paſ-"ſion which I think you ſhould not encourage. For, "to be plain with you, I fear he is in love with your "perſon only. Now this is a love, child, which can-"not produce that rational happineſs, which a woman of "ſenſe ought to expect." In ſhort, ſhe ran on with 'a great deal of ſtuff about rational happineſs, and 'women of ſenſe; and concluded with aſſuring me, 'that, after the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny, ſhe could not find 'that Mr. Bennet had an adequate opinion of my un-'derſtanding; upon which ſhe vouchſafed to make me 'many compliments, but mixed with ſeveral ſarcaſms 'concerning my learning.

'I hope, Madam, however,' ſaid ſhe to Amelia, 'you have not ſo bad an opinion of my capacity, as to 'imagine me dull enough to be offended with Mr. 'Bennet's ſentiments; for which I preſently knew ſo 'well to account. I was, indeed, charmed with his 'ingenuity, who had diſcovered, perhaps, the only 'way of reconciling my aunt to thoſe inclinations 'which I now aſſured myſelf he had for me.

'I was not long left to ſupport my hopes by my 'ſagacity. He ſoon found an opportunity of declaring 'his paſſion. He did this in ſo forcible, though gen-'tle a manner, with ſuch a profuſion of fervency and ten-'derneſs at once, that his love, like a torrent, bore

'every

'every thing before it: and I am almoſt aſhamed to
'own to you, how very ſoon he prevailed upon me to
'---to---in ſhort, to be an honeſt woman, and to confeſs
'to him the plain truth.

'When we were upon a good footing together, he
'gave me a long relation of what had paſſed at ſeveral
'interviews with my aunt, at which I had not been
'preſent. He ſaid, he had diſcovered, that as ſhe
'valued herſelf chiefly on her underſtanding, ſo ſhe was
'extremely jealous of mine, and hated me on account
'of my learning. This, as he had loved me paſſion-
'ately from his firſt ſeeing me, and had thought of
'nothing, from that time, but of throwing himſelf at
'my feet, he ſaw no way ſo open to propitiate my aunt
'as that which he had taken, by commending my
'beauty, a perfection to which ſhe had long reſigned
'all claim, at the expence of my underſtanding, in
'which he lamented my deficiency to a degree almoſt
'of ridicule. This he imputed chiefly to my learning.
'On this occaſion he advanced a ſentiment, which ſo
'pleaſed my aunt, that ſhe thought proper to make it
'her own; for I heard it afterwards more than once
'from her own mouth. Learning, he ſaid, had the
'ſame effect on the mind, that ſtrong liquors have on
'the conſtitution; both tending to eradicate all our
'natural fire and energy. His flattery had made ſuch
'a dupe of my aunt, that ſhe aſſented, without the
'leaſt ſuſpicion of his ſincerity, to all he ſaid: ſo ſure
'is vanity to weaken every fortreſs of the underſtand-
'ing, and to betray us to every attack of the enemy.

'You will believe, Madam, that I readily forgave
'him all that he ſaid, not only from that motive which
'I have mentioned, but as I was aſſured he had ſpoke
'the reverſe of his real ſentiments. I was not, how-
'ever, quite ſo well pleaſed with my aunt, who began
'to treat me as if I was really an idiot. Her contempt
'I own, a little piqued me; and I could not help often
'expreſſing my reſentment, when we were alone toge-
'ther, to Mr. Bennet; who never failed to gratify me,

'by

'by making her conceit the ſubject of his wit; a talent 'which he poſſeſſed in the moſt extraordinary degree.

'This proved of very fatal conſequence; for one 'day, while we were enjoying ourſelves in a very thick 'arbour in the garden, my aunt ſtole upon us unob- 'ſerved, and overheard our whole converſation. I wiſh, 'my dear, you underſtood Latin, that I might repeat 'you a ſentence, in which the rage of a tigreſs, that 'has loſt her young, is deſcribed. No Engliſh poet, 'as I remember, hath come up to it; nor am I my- 'ſelf equal to the undertaking. She burſt in upon us, 'open-mouthed, and after diſcharging every abuſive 'word almoſt in the only language ſhe underſtood, on 'poor Mr. Bennet, turned us both out of doors; de- 'claring ſhe would ſend my rags after me, but would 'never more permit me to ſet my foot within her 'threſhold.

'Conſider, dear Madam, to what a wretched con- 'dition we were now reduced. I had not yet received 'the ſmall legacy left me by my father; nor was Mr. 'Bennet maſter of five pounds in the whole world.

'In this ſituation, the man I doated on to diſtraction 'had but a little difficulty to perſuade me to a propoſal, 'which, indeed, I thought generous in him to make, 'as it ſeemed to proceed from that tenderneſs for my re- 'putation, to which he aſcribed it; indeed, it could 'proceed from no motive with which I ſhould have 'been diſpleaſed. In a word, within two days we 'were man and wife.

'Mr. Bennet now declared himſelf the happieſt of 'men; and for my part, I ſincerely declare, I envied 'no woman upon earth. How little, alas! did I then 'know, or ſuſpect, the price I was to pay for all my 'joys! A match of real love is, indeed, truly paradiſe; 'and ſuch perfect happineſs ſeems to be forbidden fruit 'to mortals, which we are to lament having taſted du- 'ring the remainder of our lives.

'The firſt uneaſineſs which attacked us after our 'marriage was on my aunt's account. It was very

'diſagreeable

'disagreeable to live under the nose of so near a relation, who did not acknowledge us, but, on the contrary, was ever doing us all the ill turns in her power; and making a party against us in the parish, which is always easy enough to do amongst the vulgar, against persons who are their superiors in rank, and at the same time their inferiors in fortune. This made Mr. Bennet think of procuring an exchange, in which intention he was soon after confirmed by the arrival of the rector. It was the rector's custom to spend three months every year at his living; for which purpose he reserved an apartment in his parsonage-house, which was full large enough for two such little families as then occupied it: we, at first, promised ourselves some little convenience from his boarding with us; and Mr. Bennet began to lay aside his thoughts of leaving his curacy, at least for some time. But these golden ideas presently vanished; for though we both used our utmost endeavours to please him, we soon found the impossibility of succeeding. He was, indeed, to give you his character in a word, the most peevish of mortals. This temper, notwithstanding that he was both a good and pious man, made his company so insufferable, that nothing could compensate it. If his breakfast was not ready to a moment; if a dish of meat was too much or too little done; in short, if any thing failed of exactly hitting his taste, he was sure to be out of humour all that day; so that, indeed, he was scarce ever in a good temper a whole day together: for fortune seems to take a delight in thwarting this kind of disposition, to which human life, with it's many crosses and accidents, is in truth by no means fitted.

'Mr. Bennet was now, by my desire as well as his own, determined to quit the parish; but when he attempted to get an exchange, he found it a matter of more difficulty than he had apprehended; for the rector's temper was so well known among the neighbouring clergy, that none of them could be brought

'to

'to think of ſpending three months in a year with 'him.

'After many fruitleſs enquiries, Mr. Bennet 'thought beſt to remove to London, the great mart of 'all affairs eccleſiaſtical and civil. This project greatly 'pleaſed him, and he reſolved, without more delay, 'to take his leave of the rector, which he did in the 'moſt friendly manner poſſible, and preached his fare-'wel ſermon; nor was there a dry eye in the church, 'except among the few whom my aunt, who remained 'ſtill inexorable, had prevailed upon to hate us with-'out any cauſe.

'To London we came, and took up our lodgings the 'firſt night at the inn where the ſtage-coach ſet us 'down; the next morning my huſband went out early 'on his buſineſs, and returned with the good news of 'having heard of a curacy, and of having equipped 'himſelf with a lodging in the neighbourhood of a worthy 'peer, "who," ſaid he, "was my fellow-collegiate: "and what is more, I have a direction to a perſon who "will advance your legacy at a very reaſonable rate."

'This laſt particular was extremely agreeable to me; 'for our laſt guinea was now broached, and the rector 'had lent my huſband ten pounds to pay his debts in 'the country: for with all his peeviſhneſs he was a 'good and a generous man, and had, indeed, ſo many 'valuable qualities, that I lamented his temper, after 'I knew him thoroughly, as much on his account, as 'on my own.

'We now quitted the inn, and went to our lodg-'ings, where my huſband having placed me in ſafety, 'as he ſaid, he went about the buſineſs of the legacy, 'with good aſſurance of ſucceſs.

'My huſband returned elated with his ſucceſs, the per-'ſon to whom he applied having undertaken to advance 'the legacy, which he fulfilled as ſoon as the proper 'enquiries could be made, and proper inſtruments pre-'pared for that purpoſe.

'This, however, took up ſo much time, that as our

'fund was so very low, we were reduced to some dis-
'tress, and obliged to live extremely penurious; nor
'would all do, without my taking a most disagreeable
'way of procuring money, by pawning one of my
'gowns.

'Mr. Bennet was now settled in a curacy in town,
'greatly to his satisfaction, and our affairs seemed to
'have a prosperous aspect; when he came home to me
'one morning in much apparent disorder, looking as
'pale as death, and begged me by some means or other
'to get him a dram, for that he was taken with a sud-
'den faintness and lowness of spirits.

'Frighted as I was, I immediately ran down stairs,
'and procured some rum of the mistress of the house;
'the first time, indeed, I ever knew him drink any.
'When he came to himself, he begged me not to be
'alarmed, for it was no distemper, but something that
'had vexed him, which had caused his disorder, which
'he had now perfectly recovered.

'He then told me the whole affair. He had hitherto
'deferred paying a visit to the lord whom I mentioned
'to have been formerly his fellow-collegiate, and was
'now his neighbour, till he could put himself in decent
'rigging. He had now purchased a new cassock, hat
'and wig, and went to pay his respects to his old ac-
'quaintance, who had received from him many civili-
'ties and assistances in his learning at the university,
'and had promised to return them fourfold hereafter.

'It was not without some difficulty that Mr. Ben-
'net got into the anti-chamber. Here he waited, or,
'as the phrase is, cooled his heels, for above an hour
'before he saw his lordship; nor had he seen him then,
'but by an accident; for my lord was going out, when
'he casually intercepted him in his passage to his chariot,
'He approached to salute him with some familiarity,
'though with some respect, depending on his former
'intimacy; when my lord stopping short, very gravely
'told him, he had not the pleasure of knowing him.
"How! my lord," said he, "can you have so soon
"forgot

"forgot your old acquaintance Tom Bennet?"---"O, "Mr. Bennet," cries his lordſhip, with much reſerve, "is it you? you will pardon my memory. I am glad "to ſee you, Mr. Bennet: but you muſt excuſe me at "preſent, for I am in very great haſte." 'He then 'broke from him, and without more ceremony, or any 'farther invitation, went directly into the chariot.

'This cold reception from a perſon for whom my 'huſband had a real friendſhip, and from whom he had 'great reaſon to expect a very warm return of affection, 'ſo affected the poor man, that it cauſed all thoſe ſymp-'toms which I have mentioned before.

'Though this incident produced no material conſe-'quence, I could not paſs it over in ſilence, as of all 'the misfortunes which ever befel him, it affected my 'huſband the moſt. I need not, however, to a woman 'of your delicacy, make any comments on a behaviour 'which, though I believe it is very common, is never-'theleſs cruel and baſe beyond deſcription; and is dia-'metrically oppoſed to true honour, as well as to 'goodneſs.

'To relieve the uneaſineſs which my huſband felt on 'account of his falſe friend, I prevailed with him to go 'every night, almoſt for a fortnight together, to the 'play; a diverſion of which he was greatly fond, and 'from which he did not think his being a clergyman 'excluded him. Indeed, it is very well if thoſe auſtere 'perſons who would be inclined to cenſure him on this 'head, have themſelves no greater ſins to anſwer for.

'From this time, during three months, we paſt our 'time very agreeably, a little too agreeably, perhaps, 'for our circumſtances; for however innocent diver-'ſions may be in other reſpects, they muſt be owned to 'be expenſive. When you conſider then, Madam, that 'our income from the curacy was leſs than forty 'pounds a year, and that after payment of the debt to 'the rector, and another to my aunt, with the coſts in 'law which ſhe had occaſioned by ſuing for it, my 'legacy was reduced to leſs than ſeventy pounds, you

'will not wonder that in diverſions, clothes, and the 'common expences of life, we had almoſt conſumed our 'whole ſtock.

'The inconſiderate manner in which we had lived for 'ſome time, will, I doubt not, appear to you to want 'ſome excuſe; but I have none to make for it. Two 'things, however, now happened, which occaſioned 'much ſerious reflection to Mr. Bennet. The one was, 'that I grew near my time; the other, that he now 'received a letter from Oxford, demanding the debt of 'forty pounds, which I mentioned to you before. The 'former of theſe he made a pretence of obtaining a delay 'for the payment of the latter, promiſing in two months 'to pay off half the debt, by which means he obtained 'a forbearance during that time.

'I was now delivered of a ſon; a matter which ſhould 'in reality have increaſed our concern; but, on the 'contrary, it gave us great pleaſure; greater, indeed, 'could not have been conceived at the birth of an heir 'to the moſt plentiful eſtate; ſo entirely thoughtleſs 'were we, and ſo little forecaſt had we of thoſe many 'evils and diſtreſſes to which we had rendered a human 'creature, and one ſo dear to us, liable. The day of 'a chriſtening is in all families, I believe, a day of 'jubilee and rejoicing; and yet, if we conſider the in-'tereſt of that little wretch who is the occaſion, how 'little reaſon would the moſt ſanguine perſons have for 'their joy!

'But though our eyes were too weak to look for-'ward for the ſake of our child, we could not be 'blinded to thoſe dangers that immediately threatened 'ourſelves. Mr. Bennet, at the expiration of the two 'months, received a ſecond letter from Oxford, in a 'very peremptory ſtile, and threatening a ſuit without 'any farther delay. This alarmed us in the ſtrongeſt 'manner; and my huſband, to ſecure his liberty, was 'adviſed for a while to ſhelter himſelf in the verge of 'the court.

'And now, Madam, I am entering on that ſcene

'which

'which directly leads to all my misery.'---Here she stopped and wiped her eyes, and then begging Amelia to excuse her for a few minutes, ran hastily out of the room, leaving Amelia by herself, while she refreshed her spirits with a cordial to enable her to relate what follows in the next chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Farther continued.

MRS. Bennet returning into the room, made a short apology for her absence, and then proceeded in these words---

'We now left our lodging, and took a second floor 'in that very house where you now are, to which we 'were recommended by the woman where we had be-'fore lodged; for the mistresses of both houses were 'acquainted, and, indeed, we had been all at the play 'together. To this new lodging, then (such was our 'wretched destiny!) we immediately repaired, and 'were received by Mrs. Ellison (how can I bear the 'sound of that detested name!) with much civility; 'she took care, however, during the first fortnight of 'our residence, to wait upon us every Monday morn-'ing for her rent; such being, it seems, the custom of 'this place, which, as it was inhabited chiefly by per-'sons in debt, is not the region of credit.

'My husband, by the singular goodness of the rector, 'who greatly compassionated his case, was enabled to 'continue in his curacy, though he could only do the 'duty on Sundays. He was, however, sometimes 'obliged to furnish a person to officiate at his expence; 'so that our income was very scanty; and the poor 'little remainder of the legacy being almost spent, we 'were reduced to some difficulties, and, what was 'worse, saw still a prospect of greater before our eyes.

'Under these circumstances, how agreeable to poor 'Mr. Bennet must have been the behaviour of Mrs. 'Ellison, who, when he carried her her rent on the usual 'day, told him, with a benevolent smile, that he needed 'not to give himself the trouble of such exact punctu-

'ality. She added, that if it was at any time inconve-
'nient to him, he might pay her when he pleaſed.
"To ſay the truth," ſays ſhe, "I never was ſo much
"pleaſed with any lodgers in my life. I am convinced,
"Mr. Bennet, you are a worthy man, and you are
"a very happy one too; for you have the prettieſt
"wife, and the prettieſt child, I ever ſaw." Theſe,
'dear Madam, were the words ſhe was pleaſed to make
'uſe of; and I am ſure ſhe behaved to me with ſuch an
'appearance of friendſhip and affection, that, as I could
'not perceive any poſſible views of intereſt which ſhe
'could have in her profeſſions, I eaſily believed them real.

'There lodged in the ſame houſe---O Mrs. Booth!
'the blood runs cold to my heart, and ſhould run cold
'to yours when I name him---there lodged in the ſame
'houſe a lord---the lord, indeed, whom I have ſince
'ſeen in your company. This lord, Mrs. Elliſon told
'me, had taken a great fancy to my little Charley.
'Fool that I was, and blinded by my own paſſion,
'which made me conceive that an infant, not three
'months old, could be really the object of affection to
'any beſides a parent; and more eſpecially to a young
'fellow! But if I was ſilly in being deceived, how
'wicked was the wretch who deceived me! who uſed
'ſuch art, and employed ſuch pains, ſuch incredible
'pains to deceive me! He acted the part of a nurſe to
'my little infant; he danced it, he lulled it, he kiſſed
'it; declared it was the very picture of a nephew of
'his, his favourite ſiſter's child; and ſaid ſo many kind
'and fond things of it's beauty, that I myſelf, though,
'I believe, one of the tendereſt and fondeſt of mothers,
'ſcarce carried my own ideas of my little darling's per-
fection beyond the compliments which he paid it.

'My lord, however, perhaps from modeſty before
'my face, fell far ſhort of what Mrs. Elliſon reported
'from him. And now, when ſhe found the impreſſion
'which was made on me by theſe means, ſhe took
'every opportunity of inſinuating to me his lordſhip's
'many virtues, his great goodneſs to his ſiſter's chil-

'dren

'dren in particular; nor did she fail to drop some hints, 'which gave me the most simple and groundless hopes 'of strange consequences from his fondness to my 'Charley.

'When by these means, which, simple as they may 'appear, were, perhaps, the most artful, my lord had 'gained something more, I think, than my esteem, 'he took the surest method to confirm himself in my 'affection. This was, by professing the highest friend-'ship for my husband: for, as to myself, I do assure 'you, he never shewed me more than common respect; 'and I hope you will believe, I should have immedi-'ately startled and flown off if he had. Poor I accounted 'for all the friendship which he expressed for my hus-'band, and all the fondness which she shewed to my 'boy, from the great prettiness of the one, and the 'great merit of the other; foolishly conceiving, that 'others saw with my eyes, and felt with my heart. 'Little did I dream, that my own unfortunate person 'was the fountain of all this lord's goodness, and was 'the intended price of it.

'One evening, as I was drinking tea with Mrs. 'Ellison by my lord's fire, (a liberty which she never 'scrupled taking when he was gone out) my little 'Charley, now about half a year old, sitting in her 'lap; my lord, accidentally no doubt---indeed, I then 'thought it so---came in. I was confounded, and 'offered to go; but my lord declared, if he disturbed 'Mrs. Ellison's company, as he phrased it, he would 'himself leave the room. When I was thus prevailed 'on to keep my seat, my lord immediately took my 'little baby into his lap, and gave it some tea there, 'not a little at the expence of his embroidery; for he 'was very richly dress: indeed, he was as fine a figure 'as, perhaps, ever was seen. His behaviour on this 'occasion gave me many ideas in his favour. I thought 'he discovered good sense, good-nature, condescension, 'and other good qualities, by the fondness he shewed 'to my child, and the contempt he seemed to express

'for

'for his finery, which ſo greatly became him: for I 'cannot deny, but that he was the handſomeſt and 'genteeleſt perſon in the world; though ſuch conſide-'rations advanced him not a ſtep in my favour.

'My huſband now returned from church (for this 'happened on a Sunday), and was, by my lord's par-'ticular deſire, uſhered into the room. My lord re-'ceived him with the utmoſt politeneſs, and with many 'profeſſions of eſteem; which he ſaid, he had con-'ceived from Mrs. Elliſon's repreſentations of his 'merit. He then proceeded to mention the living, 'which was detained from my huſband, of which Mrs. 'Elliſon had likewiſe informed him; and ſaid, he 'thought it would be no difficult matter to obtain a 'reſtoration of it by the authority of the biſhop, who 'was his particular friend, and to whom he would 'take an immediate opportunity of mentioning it. 'This, at laſt, he determined to do the very next 'day; when he invited us both to dinner, where 'we were to be acquainted with his lordſhip's 'ſucceſs.

'My lord now inſiſted on my huſband's ſtaying ſup-'per with him, without taking any notice of me; but 'Mrs. Elliſon declared, he ſhould not part man and 'wife; and that ſhe herſelf would ſtay with me. The 'motion was too agreeable to me to be rejected; and, 'except the little time I retired to put my child to bed, 'we ſpent together the moſt agreeable evening imagi-'nable; nor was it, I believe, eaſy to decide, whether 'Mr. Bennet or myſelf were moſt delighted with his 'lordſhip and Mrs. Elliſon: but this I aſſure you, the 'generoſity of the one, and the extreme civility and 'kindneſs of the other, were the ſubjects of our con-'verſation all the enſuing night, during which we nei-'ther of us cloſed our eyes.

'The next day at dinner, my lord acquainted us, 'that he had prevailed with the biſhop to write to the 'clergyman in the country; indeed, he told us, that 'he had engaged the biſhop to be very warm in our in-

'tereſt,

'tereſt, and had not the leaſt doubt of ſucceſs. This 'threw us both into a flow of ſpirits; and in the after-'noon, Mr. Bennet, at Mrs. Elliſon's requeſt, which 'was ſeconded by his lordſhip, related the hiſtory of 'our lives, from our firſt acquaintance. My lord 'ſeemed much affected with ſome tender ſcenes, which 'as no man could better feel, ſo none could better de-'ſcribe than my huſband. When he had finiſhed, my 'lord begged pardon for mentioning an occurrence 'which gave him ſuch a particular concern, as it had 'diſturbed that delicious ſtate of happineſs in which 'we had lived at our former lodging. "It would be "ungenerous," ſaid he, "to rejoice at an accident, "which, though it brought me fortunately acquainted "with two of the moſt agreeable people in the world, "was yet at the expence of your mutual felicity. The "circumſtance I mean, is your debt at Oxford; pray "how doth that ſtand? I am reſolved it ſhall never "diſturb your happineſs hereafter." 'At theſe 'words, the tears burſt from my poor huſband's eyes; 'and in an extaſy of gratitude, he cried out, "Your "lordſhip overcomes me with generoſity. If you go "on in this manner, both my wife's gratitude and "mine muſt be bankrupt." He then acquainted my 'lord with the exact ſtate of the caſe, and received aſ-'ſurances from him that the debt ſhould never trouble 'him. My huſband was again breaking out into the 'warmeſt expreſſions of gratitude; but my lord ſtopped 'him ſhort, ſaying, "If you have any obligation, it "is to my little Charley here, from whoſe little inno-"cent ſmiles I have received more than the value of "this trifling debt in pleaſure." I forgot to tell you, 'that when I offered to leave the room after dinner, 'upon my child's account, my lord would not let me, 'but ordered the child to be brought to me. He now 'took it out of my arms, placed it upon his knee, and 'fed it with ſome fruit from the deſert. In ſhort, it 'would be more tedious to you than to myſelf, to re-'late the thouſand little tenderneſſes he ſhewed to the

'child,

'child. He gave it many baubles; amongſt the reſt 'was a coral, worth, at leaſt, three pounds; and when 'my huſband was confined near a fortnight to his cham-'ber with a cold, he viſited the child every day (for to 'this infant's account were all the viſits placed;) and 'ſeldom failed of accompanying his viſit with a preſent 'to the little thing.

'Here, Mrs. Booth, I cannot help mentioning a 'doubt which hath often ariſen in my mind, ſince I 'have been enough miſtreſs of myſelf to reflect on this 'horrid train which was laid to blow up my innocence. 'Wicked and barbarous it was to the higheſt degree, 'without any queſtion; but my doubt is whether the 'art or folly of it be the more conſpicuous; for how-'ever delicate and refined the art muſt be allowed to 'have been, the folly, I think, muſt, upon a fair ex-'amination, appear no leſs aſtoniſhing: for to lay all 'conſiderations of cruelty and crime out of the caſe, 'what a fooliſh bargain doth the man make for him-'ſelf, who purchaſes ſo poor a pleaſure at ſo high a 'price!

'We had lived near three weeks with as much free-'dom as if we had been all of the ſame family, when 'one afternoon my lord propoſed to my huſband to ride 'down himſelf to ſolicit the ſurrender; for he ſaid the 'biſhop had received an unſatisfactory anſwer from the 'parſon, and had writ a ſecond letter more preſſing; 'which his lordſhip now promiſed us to ſtrengthen by 'one of his own, that my huſband was to carry with 'him. Mr. Bennet agreed to this propoſal with great 'thankfulneſs, and the next day was appointed for 'his journey. The diſtance was near ſeventy miles.

'My huſband ſet out on his journey, and he had 'ſcarce left me before Mrs. Elliſon came into the room, 'and endeavoured to comfort me in his abſence: to ſay 'the truth, though he was to be from me but a few 'days, and the purpoſe of his going was to fix 'our happineſs on a ſound foundation for all our future 'days, I could ſcarce ſupport my ſpirits under this firſt

'ſepa-

'ſeparation. But though I then thought Mrs. Elliſon's 'intentions to be moſt kind and friendly, yet the means 'ſhe uſed were utterly ineffectual, and appeared to me 'injudicious. Inſtead of ſoothing my uneaſineſs, which 'is always the firſt phyſic to be given to grief, ſhe 'rallied me upon it, and began to talk in a very unu-'ſual ſtile of gaiety, in which ſhe treated conjugal love 'with much ridicule.

'I gave her to underſtand that ſhe diſpleaſed me by 'this diſcourſe; but ſhe ſoon found means to give ſuch 'a turn to it, as made a merit of all ſhe had ſaid. 'And now, when ſhe had worked me into a good hu-'mour, ſhe made a propoſal to me, which I at firſt re-'jected; but at laſt fatally, too fatally, ſuffered my-'ſelf to be over-perſuaded. This was to go to a maſ-'querade at Ranelagh, for which my lord had furniſhed 'her with tickets.'

At theſe words Amelia turned as pale as death, and haſtily begged her friend to give her a glaſs of water, ſome air, or any thing. Mrs. Bennet having thrown open the window, and procured the water, which prevented Amelia from fainting, looked at her with much tenderneſs, and cried---'I do not wonder, my dear Ma-'dam, that you are affected with my mentioning that 'fatal maſquerade; ſince I firmly believe the ſame ruin 'was intended for you, at the ſame place; the apprehen-'ſion of which occaſioned the letter I ſent you this morn-'ing, and all the trial of your patience which I have 'made ſince.'

Amelia gave her a tender embrace, with many expreſſions of the warmeſt gratitude; aſſured her, ſhe had pretty well recovered her ſpirits, and begged her to continue her ſtory; which Mrs. Bennet then did. However, as our readers may likewiſe be glad to recover their ſpirits alſo, we ſhall here put an end to this chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The Story farther continued.

MRS. Bennet proceeded thus---

'I was at length prevailed on to accompany 'Mrs. Elliſon to the maſquerade. Here, I muſt 'confeſs, the pleaſantneſs of the place, the variety 'of the dreſſes, and the novelty of the thing, gave 'me much delight, and raiſed my fancy to the high-'eſt pitch. As I was entirely void of all ſuſpicion, 'my mind threw off all reſerve, and pleaſure only 'filled my thoughts. Innocence, it is true, poſſeſſed 'my heart; but it was innocence unguarded, intoxi-'cated with fooliſh deſires, and liable to every tempta-'tion. During the firſt two hours we had many 'trifling adventures, not worth remembering. At 'length my lord joined us, and continued with me all 'the evening; and we danced ſeveral dances together. 'I need not, I believe, tell you, Madam, how engaging 'his converſation is. I wiſh I could with truth ſay, 'I was not pleaſed with it; or, at leaſt, that I had a 'right to be pleaſed with it. But I will diſguiſe no-'thing from you: I now began to diſcover that he had 'ſome affection for me; but he had already too firm 'a footing in my eſteem to make the diſcovery ſhock-'ing. I will, I will own the truth; I was delighted 'with perceiving a paſſion in him, which I was not 'unwilling to think he had had from the beginning, and 'to derive his having concealed it ſo long from his awe 'of my virtue, and his reſpect to my underſtanding. 'I aſſure you, Madam, at the ſame time, my inten-'tions were, never to exceed the bounds of innocence. 'I was charmed with the delicacy of his paſſion; and 'in the fooliſh, thoughtleſs turn of mind in which I 'then was, I fancied I might give ſome very diſtant 'encouragement to ſuch a paſſion, in ſuch a man, with 'the utmoſt ſafety; that I might indulge my vanity and 'intereſt at once, without being guilty of the leaſt injury.

'I know Mrs. Booth will condemn all theſe thoughts, 'and I condemn them no leſs myſelf; for it is now my

'ſtedfaſt

'ſtedfaſt opinion, that the woman who gives up the 'leaſt outwork of her virtue, doth in that very mo-'ment betray the citadel.

'About two o'clock we returned home, and found 'a very handſome collation provided for us. I was 'aſked to partake of it; and I did not, I could not re-'fuſe. I was not, however, entirely void of all ſuſpi-'cion, and I made many reſolutions; one of which 'was, not to drink a drop more than my uſual ſtint. 'This was, at the utmoſt, little more than half a pint 'of ſmall punch.

'I adhered ſtrictly to my quantity; but in the qua-'lity, I am convinced, I was deceived; for, before I 'left the room, I found my head giddy. What the 'villain gave me, I know not; but beſides being in-'toxicated, I perceived effects from it which are not to 'be deſcribed.

'Here, Madam, I muſt draw a curtain over the re-'ſidue of that fatal night. Let it ſuffice, that it in-'volved me in the moſt dreadful ruin; a ruin to which 'I can truly ſay, I never conſented; and of which I 'was ſcarce conſcious, when the villainous man avowed 'it to my face in the morning.

'Thus I have deduced my ſtory to the moſt horrid 'period; happy had I been had this been the period 'of my life; but I was reſerved for greater miſeries: 'but before I enter on them, I will mention ſomething 'very remarkable, with which I was now acquainted, 'and that will ſhew there was nothing of accident 'which had befallen me; but that all was the effect of 'a long, regular, premeditated deſign.

'You may remember, Madam, I told you that we 'were recommended to Mrs. Elliſon by the woman at 'whoſe houſe we had before lodged. This woman, it 'ſeems, was one of my lord's pimps, and had before 'introduced me to his lordſhip's notice.

'You are to know then, Madam, that this villain, 'this lord, now confeſſed to me, that he had firſt ſeen 'me in the gallery at the oratorio; whither I had gone

'with tickets, with which the woman where I first 'lodged had presented me, and which were, it seems, 'purchased by my lord. Here I first met the vile be-'trayer, who was disguised in a rug coat, and a patch 'upon his face.

At these words Amelia cried---'O gracious Hea-'vens!' and fell back in her chair. Mrs. Bennet, with proper applications, brought her back to life; and then Amelia acquainted her, that she herself had seen the same person in the same place, and in the same disguise. 'O, Mrs. Bennet,' cried she, 'how am I indebted to 'you! what words, what thanks, what actions can 'demonstrate the gratitude of my sentiments! I look 'upon you, and shall always look upon you, as my 'preserver from the brink of a precipice, from which I 'was falling into the same ruin which you have so ge-'nerously, so kindly, and so nobly disclosed for my 'sake.'

Here the two ladies compared notes, and it appeared, that his lordship's behaviour at the oratorio had been alike to both; that he made use of the very same words, the very same actions to Amelia, which he had practised over before on poor unfortunate Mrs. Bennet. It may, perhaps, be thought strange, that neither of them could recollect him; but so it was. And, indeed, if we consider the force of disguise, the very short time that either of them was with him at this first interview, and the very little curiosity that must have been supposed in the minds of the ladies, together with the amusement in which they were then engaged, all wonder will, I apprehend, cease. Amelia, however, now declared, she remembered his voice and features perfectly well, and was thoroughly satisfied he was the same person. She then accounted for his not having visited in the afternoon, according to his promise, from her declared resolutions to Mrs. Ellison not to see him. She now burst forth into some very satirical invectives against that lady, and declared she had the art, as well as the wickedness, of the devil himself. Many

Many congratulations now paſt from Mrs. Bennet to Amelia, which were returned with the moſt hearty acknowledgments from that lady. But inſtead of filling our paper with theſe, we ſhall purſue Mrs. Bennet's ſtory, which ſhe reſumed, as we ſhall find in the next chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

Farther Continuation.

'NO ſooner,' ſaid Mrs. Bennet, continuing her ſtory, 'was my lord departed, than Mrs. Elliſon came to me. She behaved in ſuch a manner, 'when ſhe became acquainted with what had paſt, 'that though I was at firſt ſatisfied of her guilt, ſhe 'began to ſtagger my opinion; and, at length, prevailed upon me entirely to acquit her. She raved 'like a mad woman againſt my lord, ſwore he ſhould 'not ſtay a moment in her houſe, and that ſhe would 'never ſpeak to him more. In ſhort, had ſhe been the 'moſt innocent woman in the world, ſhe could not have 'ſpoke nor acted any otherwiſe; nor could ſhe have vented more wrath and indignation againſt the betrayer.

'That part of her denunciation of vengeance, which 'concerned my lord's leaving the houſe, ſhe vowed 'ſhould be executed immediately; but then, ſeeming 'to recollect herſelf, ſhe ſaid, "Conſider, my dear child, "it is for your ſake alone I ſpeak; will not ſuch a "proceeding give ſome ſuſpicion to your huſband?" I 'anſwered, that I valued not that; that I was reſolved 'to inform my huſband of all, the moment I ſaw him; 'with many expreſſions of deteſtation of myſelf, and an 'indifference for life, and for every thing elſe.

'Mrs. Elliſon, however, found means to ſoothe me, 'and to ſatisfy me with my own innocence; a point in 'which, I believe, we are all eaſily convinced. In 'ſhort, I was perſuaded to acquit both myſelf and 'her, to lay the whole guilt upon my lord, and to reſolve to conceal it from my huſband.

'The whole day I confined myſelf to my chamber, 'and ſaw no perſon but Mrs. Elliſon. I was, indeed,

'ashamed to look any one in the face. Happily for 'me, my lord went into the country without attempt-'ing to come near me; for I believe his sight would 'have driven me to madness.

'The next day I told Mrs. Ellison, that I was re-'solved to leave her lodgings the moment my lord came 'to town; not on her account, (for I really inclined 'to think her innocent) but on my lord's, whose face I 'was resolved, if possible, never more to behold. She 'told me, I had no reason to quit her house on that 'score; for that my lord himself had left her lodgings 'that morning, in resentment, she believed, of the 'abuses which she had cast on him the day before.

'This confirmed me in the opinion of her inno-'cence; nor hath she from that day to this, till my ac-'quaintance with you, Madam, done any thing to for-'feit my opinion. On the contrary, I owe her many 'good offices; amongst the rest I have an annuity of 'one hundred and fifty pounds a year from my lord, 'which I know was owing to her solicitations; for she 'is not void of generosity or good-nature; though, by 'what I have lately seen, I am convinced she was the 'cause of my ruin, and hath endeavoured to lay the 'same snares for you.

'But to return to my melancholy story. My hus-'band returned at the appointed time; and I met him 'with an agitation of mind not to be described. Per-'haps the fatigue which he had undergone in his 'journey, and his dissatisfaction at his ill success, pre-'vented his taking notice of what I feared was too vi-'sible. All his hopes were entirely frustrated; the 'clergyman had not received the bishop's letter; and 'as to my lord's, he treated it with derision and con-'tempt. Tired as he was, Mr. Bennet would not sit 'down till he had enquired for my lord, intending to 'go and pay his compliments. Poor man! he little 'suspected that he had deceived him, as I have since 'known, concerning the bishop; much less did he sus-'pect any other injury. But the lord---the villain was

'gone

'gone out of town, ſo that he was forced to poſtpone 'all his gratitude.

'Mr. Bennet returned to town late on the Saturday 'night; nevertheleſs he performed his duty at church the 'next day; but I refuſed to go with him. This, I 'think, was the firſt refuſal I was guilty of ſince our 'marriage; but I was become ſo miſerable, that his 'preſence, which had been the ſource of all my happi-'neſs, was become my bane. I will not ſay, I hated 'to ſee him; but I can ſay I was aſhamed, nay, 'afraid, to look him in the face. I was conſcious of 'I knew not what: guilt, I hope, it cannot be called.'

'I hope not; nay, I think not:' cries Amelia.

'My huſband,' continued Mrs. Bennet, 'perceived 'my diſſatisfaction, and imputed it to his ill ſucceſs in 'the country. I was pleaſed with this ſelf-deluſion; 'and yet, when I fairly computed the agonies I ſuf-'fered at his endeavours to comfort me on that head, 'I paid moſt ſeverely for it. O, my dear Mrs. Booth, 'happy is the deceived party between true lovers, and 'wretched indeed is the author of the deceit!

'In this wretched condition I paſt a whole week, 'the moſt miſerable, I think, of my whole life, en-'deavouring to humour my huſband's deluſion, and to 'conceal my own tortures; but I had reaſon to fear I 'could not ſucceed long; for on the Saturday night I 'perceived a viſible alteration in his behaviour to me. 'He went to bed in an apparent ill-humour, turned 'ſullenly from me; and if I offered at any endear-'ments, he gave me only peeviſh anſwers.

'After a reſtleſs, turbulent night, he roſe early on 'Sunday morning, and walked down ſtairs. I ex-'pected his return to breakfaſt, but was ſoon informed 'by the maid, that he was gone forth; and that it was 'no more than ſeven o'clock. All this, you may be-'lieve, Madam, alarmed me; I ſaw plainly he had 'diſcovered the fatal ſecret, though by what means I 'could not divine. The ſtate of my mind was very 'little ſhort of madneſs. Sometimes I thought of run-

'ning away from my injured husband, and sometimes 'of putting an end to my life.

'In the midst of such perturbations I spent the day. 'My husband returned in the evening.---O heavens! 'can I describe what followed! It is impossible; I 'shall sink under the relation. He entered the room, 'with a face as white as a sheet, his lips trembling, 'and his eyes red as coals of fire, and starting as it 'were from his head. "Molly," cries he, throwing 'himself into the chair, "are you well?"---"Good "heavens!" says I, "what's the matter?---Indeed I "cannot say I am well."---"No!" says he, starting from his chair, "false monster! you have betrayed "me, destroyed me; you have ruined your husband." 'Then looking like a fury, he snatched off a large book 'from the table, and with the malice of a madman 'threw it at my head, and knocked me down back-'wards. He then caught me up in his arms, and 'kissed me with most extravagant tenderness; then 'looking me stedfastly in the face for several moments, 'the tears gushed in a torrent from his eyes, and with 'his utmost violence he threw me again on the floor--- 'kicked me, stamped upon me. I believed, indeed, 'his intent was to kill me, and I believe he thought he 'had accomplished it.

'I lay on the ground for some minutes, I believe, 'deprived of my senses. When I recovered myself, I 'found my husband lying by my side on his face, and the 'blood running from him. It seems when he thought 'he had dispatched me, he run his head with all his 'force against a chest of drawers which stood in the 'room, and gave himself a dreadful wound in his head.

'I can truly say, I felt not the least resentment for 'the usage I had received; I thought I deserved it all; 'though, indeed, I little guessed what he had suffered 'from me. I now used the most earnest entreaties to 'him to compose himself; and endeavoured with my 'feeble arms to raise him from the ground. At length 'he broke from me, and springing from the ground, flung

'him-

'himself into a chair, when looking wildly at me, he 'cried, "Go from me, Molly. I beseech you, leave "me; I would not kill you." He then discovered to 'me---O Mrs. Booth, can you not guess it!---I was, 'indeed, polluted by the villain; I had infected my 'husband. O heavens! why do I live to relate any 'thing so horrid; I will not, I cannot yet survive it! 'I cannot forgive myself; Heaven cannot forgive me!'

Here she became inarticulate with the violence of her grief, and fell presently into such agonies, that the frighted Amelia began to call aloud for some assistance. Upon this a maid-servant came up, who seeing her mistress in a violent convulsion fit, presently screamed out she was dead; upon which one of the other sex made his appearance, and who should this be but the honest serjeant; whose countenance soon made it evident, that though a soldier, and a brave one too, he was not the least concerned of all the company on this occasion.

The reader, if he hath been acquainted with scenes of this kind, very well knows, that Mrs. Bennet, in the usual time, returned again to the possession of her voice; the first use of which she made, was to express her astonishment at the presence of the serjeant, and with a frantic air to enquire who he was.

The maid, concluding that her mistress was not yet returned to her senses, answered, 'Why, 'tis my master, 'Madam. Heaven preserve your senses, Madam!--Lord, 'Sir, my mistress must be very bad not to know you.'

What Atkinson thought at this instant, I will not say; but certain it is, he looked not over wise. He attempted twice to take hold of Mrs. Bennet's hand, but she withdrew it hastily; and presently after, rising up from her chair, she declared herself pretty well again, and desired Atkinson and the maid to withdraw, both of whom presently obeyed; the serjeant appearing by his countenance to want comfort almost as much as the lady did to whose assistance he had been summoned.

It is a good maxim, to trust a person entirely, or not at all; for a secret is often innocently blabbed out by those

those who know but half of it. Certain it is, that the maid's speech communicated a suspicion to the mind of Amelia, which the behaviour of the serjeant did not tend to remove. What that is, the sagacious readers may likewise probably suggest to themselves; if not, they must wait our time for disclosing it. We shall now resume the history of Mrs. Bennet, who, after many apologies, proceeded to the matters in the next chapter.

CHAP. IX.

The Conclusion of Mrs. Bennet's History.

'WHEN I became sensible,' cries Mrs. Bennet, 'of the injury I had done my husband, I threw 'myself at his feet, and embracing his knees, while I 'bathed them with my tears, I begged a patient hearing; declaring if he was not satisfied with what I 'should say, I would become a willing victim of his 'resentment. I said, and I said truly, that if I owed 'my death that instant to his hands, I should have no 'other terror, but that of the fatal consequence which 'it might produce to himself.

'He seemed a little pacified, and bid me say whatever I pleased.

'I then gave him a faithful relation of all that had 'happened. He heard me with great attention; and, 'at the conclusion, cried, with a deep sigh, "O Molly, 'I believe it all. You must have been betrayed as "you tell me; you could not be guilty of such base-"ness, such cruelty, such ingratitude." He then--- 'O it is impossible to describe his behaviour---he expressed such kindness, such tenderness, such concern 'for the manner in which he had used me---I cannot 'dwell on this scene---I shall relapse---you must excuse me.'

Amelia begged her to omit any thing which so affected her; and she proceeded thus.

'My husband, who was more convinced than I of 'Mrs. Ellison's guilt, declared he would not sleep that 'night in her house. He then went out to see for a 'lodging: he gave me all the money he had, and left

'me

'me to pay her bill, and put up the cloaths, telling me, 'if I had not money enough, I might leave the cloaths 'as a pledge; but he vowed he could not anſwer for 'himſelf, if he ſaw the face of Mrs. Elliſon.

'Words can ſcarce expreſs the behaviour of that 'artful woman, it was ſo kind and ſo generous. She 'ſaid, ſhe did not blame my huſband's reſentment, nor 'could ſhe expect any other but that he and all the 'world ſhould cenſure her. That ſhe hated her houſe 'almoſt as much as we did, and deteſted her couſin, if 'poſſible, more. In fine, ſhe ſaid that I might leave 'my cloaths there that evening; but that ſhe would 'ſend them to us the next morning. That ſhe ſcorned 'the thought of detaining them; and as for the paltry 'debt, we might pay her whenever we pleaſed:---for, 'to do her juſtice, with all her vices, ſhe hath ſome good 'in her.'

'Some good in her indeed!' cried Amelia, with great indignation.

'We were ſcarce ſettled in our new lodgings,' continued Mrs. Bennet, 'when my huſband began to 'complain of a pain in his inſide. He told me he 'feared he had done himſelf ſome injury in his rage, 'and had burſt ſomething within him. As to the 'odious---I cannot bear the thought, the great ſkill of 'his ſurgeon ſoon entirely cured him; but his other 'complaint, inſtead of yielding to any application, 'grew ſtill worſe and worſe, nor ever ended till it 'brought him to his grave.

'O, Mrs. Booth, could I have been certain that I 'had occaſioned this, however innocently I had occa-'ſioned it, I could never have ſurvived it; but the ſur-'geon who opened him after his death, aſſured me, 'that he died of what they call a polypus in his heart, 'and that nothing which had happened on account of 'me, was in the leaſt the occaſion of it.

'I have, however, related the affair truly to you. 'The firſt complaint I ever heard of the kind, was 'within a day or two after we left Mrs. Elliſon's; and

'this

'this complaint remained till his death, which might 'induce him, perhaps, to attribute his death to ano-'ther cauſe; but the ſurgeon, who is a man of the 'higheſt eminence, hath always declared the contrary 'to me, with the moſt poſitive certainty; and this 'opinion hath been my only comfort.

'When my huſband died, which was about ten weeks 'after we quitted Mrs. Elliſon's, of whom I had then 'a different opinion from what I have now, I was left 'in the moſt wretched condition imaginable. I believe, 'Madam, ſhe ſhewed you my letter. Indeed ſhe did 'every thing for me at that time, which I could have 'expected from the beſt of friends. She ſupplied me 'with money from her own pocket, by which means I 'was preſerved from a diſtreſs in which I muſt have 'otherwiſe inevitably periſhed.

'Her kindneſs to me in this ſeaſon of diſtreſs pre-'vailed on me to return again to her houſe. Why, 'indeed, ſhould I have refuſed an offer ſo very conve-'nient for me to accept, and which ſeemed ſo generous 'in her to make! Here I lived a very retired life, with 'my little babe, ſeeing no company but Mrs. Elliſon 'herſelf, for a full quarter of a year. At laſt Mrs. 'Elliſon brought me a parchment from my lord, in 'which he had ſettled upon me, at her inſtance, as ſhe 'told me, and as I believe it was, an annuity of one 'hundred and fifty pounds a year. This was, I 'think, the very firſt time ſhe had mentioned his hate-'ful name to me ſince my return to her houſe. And 'ſhe now prevailed upon me, though, I aſſure you not 'without much difficulty, to ſuffer him to execute the 'deed in my preſence.

'I will not deſcribe our interview; I am not able to 'deſcribe it, and I have often wondered how I found 'ſpirits to ſupport it. This I will ſay for him, that, 'if he was not a real penitent, no man alive could act 'the part better.

'Beſide reſentment, I had another motive of my 'backwardneſs to agree to ſuch a meeting; and this

'was

'was fear. I apprehended, and ſurely not without 'reaſon, that the annuity was rather meant as a bribe 'than a recompenſe, and that farther deſigns were laid 'againſt my innocence: but in this I found myſelf 'happily deceived; for neither then, nor at any time 'ſince, have I ever had the leaſt ſolicitation of that 'kind. Nor, indeed, have I ſeen the leaſt occaſion to 'think my lord had any ſuch deſires.

'Good heavens! what are theſe men! what is this 'appetite, which muſt have novelty and reſiſtance for 'it's provocatives; and which is delighted with us no 'longer than while we may be conſidered in the light of 'enemies!'

'I thank you, Madam,' cries Amelia, 'for re-'lieving me from my fears on your account; I trem-'bled at the conſequence of this ſecond acquaintance 'with ſuch a man, and in ſuch a ſituation.'

'I aſſure you, Madam, I was in no danger,' re-turned Mrs. Bennet; 'for beſides that I think I could 'have pretty well relied on my own reſolution, I have 'heard ſince, at St. Edmund's Bury, from an intimate 'acquaintance of my lord's, who was an entire ſtranger 'to my affairs, that the higheſt degree of inconſtancy 'is his character; and that few of his numberleſs miſ-'treſſes had ever received a ſecond viſit from him.

'Well, Madam,' continued ſhe, 'I think I have 'little more to trouble you with; unleſs I ſhould relate 'to you my long ill ſtate of health, from which I am 'lately, I thank Heaven, recovered; or unleſs I ſhould 'mention to you the moſt grievous accident that ever 'befel me, the loſs of my poor dear Charley.' Here ſhe made a full ſtop, and the tears ran down into her boſom.

Amelia was ſilent a few minutes, while ſhe gave the lady time to vent her paſſion; after which ſhe began to pour forth a vaſt profuſion of acknowledgements for the trouble ſhe had taken in relating her hiſtory; but chiefly for the motive which had induced her to it, and for the kind warning which ſhe had given her by

the

the little note which Mrs. Bennet had ſent her that morning.

'Yes, Madam,' cries Mrs. Bennet, 'I am convinced by what I have lately ſeen, that you are the deſtined ſacrifice to this wicked lord; and that Mrs. Elliſon, whom I no longer doubt to have been the inſtrument of my ruin, intended to betray you in the ſame manner. The day I met my lord in your apartment, I began to entertain ſome ſuſpicions, and I took Mrs. Elliſon very roundly to taſk upon them. Her behaviour, notwithſtanding many aſſeverations to the contrary, convinced me I was right; and I intended, more than once, to ſpeak to you, but could not; till laſt night the mention of the maſquerade determined me to delay it no longer. I therefore ſent you that note this morning; and am glad you ſo luckily diſcovered the writer, as it hath given me this opportunity of eaſing my mind; and of honeſtly ſhewing you how unworthy I am of your friendſhip, at the ſame time that I ſo earneſtly deſire it.

CHAP. X.

Being the laſt Chapter of the ſeventh Book.

AMELIA did not fail to make proper compliments to Mrs. Bennet on the concluſion of her ſpeech in the laſt chapter. She told her, that from the firſt moment of her acquaintance ſhe had the ſtrongeſt inclination to her friendſhip; and that her deſires of that kind were much increaſed by hearing her ſtory. 'Indeed, Madam,' ſays ſhe, 'you are much too ſevere a judge on yourſelf; for they muſt have very little candour, in my opinion, who look upon your caſe with any ſevere eye. To me, I aſſure you, you appear highly the object of compaſſion; and I ſhall always eſteem you as an innocent and an unfortunate woman.'

Amelia would then have taken her leave; but Mrs. Bennet ſo ſtrongly preſſed her to ſtay to breakfaſt, that at length ſhe complied: indeed, ſhe had faſted ſo long, and her gentle ſpirits had been ſo agitated with variety

of

of paſſions, that nature very ſtrongly ſeconded Mrs. Bennet's motion.

Whilſt the maid was preparing the tea-equipage, Amelia, with a little ſlyneſs in her countenance, aſked Mrs. Bennet, if Serjeant Atkinſon did not lodge in the ſame houſe with her: the other reddened ſo extremely at the queſtion, repeated the ſerjeant's name with ſuch heſitation, and behaved ſo aukwardly, that Amelia wanted no farther confirmation of her ſuſpicions. She would not, however, declare them abruptly to the other, but began a diſſertation on the ſerjeant's virtues; and after obſerving the great concern which he had manifeſted, when Mrs. Bennet was in her fit, concluded with ſaying, ſhe believed the ſerjeant would make the beſt huſband in the world; for that he had great tenderneſs of heart, and a gentleneſs of manners not often to be found in any man, and much ſeldomer in perſons of his rank.

'And why not in his rank?' ſaid Mrs. Bennet. 'Indeed, Mrs. Booth, we rob the lower order of mankind of their due. I do not deny the force and power of education; but when we conſider how very injudicious is the education of the better ſort in general, how little they are inſtructed in the practice of virtue, we ſhall not expect to find the heart much improved by it. And even as to the head, how very ſlightly do we commonly find it improved, by what is called a genteel education! I have myſelf, I think, ſeen inſtances of as great goodneſs, and as great underſtanding too, among the lower ſort of people as among the higher. Let us compare your ſerjeant, now, with the lord who hath been the ſubject of our converſation: on which ſide would an impartial judge decide the balance to incline?'

'How monſtrous then,' cries Amelia, 'is the opinion of thoſe who conſider our matching ourſelves the leaſt below us in degree, as a kind of contamination!'

'A moſt abſurd and prepoſterous ſentiment,' anſwered Mrs. Bennet, warmly; 'how abhorrent from

'justice, from common sense, and from humanity! but 'how extremely incongruous with a religion, which 'professes to know no difference of degree, but ranks 'all mankind on the footing of brethren! Of all kinds 'of pride, there is none so unchristian as that of sta-'tion; in reality, there is none so contemptible. Con-'tempt, indeed, may be said to be it's own object; 'for my own part, I know none so despicable as those 'who despise others.'

'I do assure you,' said Amelia, 'you speak my own 'sentiments. I give you my word, I should not be 'ashamed of being the wife of an honest man in any sta-'tion. Nor, if I had been much higher than I was, 'should I have thought myself degraded by calling our 'honest serjeant my husband.'

'Since you have made this declaration,' cries Mrs. Bennet, 'I am sure you will not be offended at a secret 'I am going to mention to you.'

'Indeed, my dear,' answered Amelia, smiling, 'I 'wonder rather you have concealed it so long; especially 'after the many hints I have given you.'

'Nay, pardon me, Madam,' replied the other; 'I do not remember any such hints; and, perhaps, 'you do not even guess what I am going to say. My 'secret is this: that no woman never had so sincere, so 'passionate a lover, as you have had in the serjeant.'

'I a lover in the serjeant? I!' cries Amelia, a little surprized.

'Have patience,' answered the other; 'I say, you, 'my dear. As much surprized as you appear, I tell 'you no more than the truth; and yet it is a truth you 'could hardly expect to hear from me, especially with 'so much good-humour; since I will honestly confess 'to you---but what need have I to confess what I know 'you guess already! Tell me now sincerely, don't 'you guess?'

'I guess, indeed, and hope,' said she, 'that he is 'your husband.'

'He is indeed my husband, cries the other; 'and I 'am

'am moſt happy in your approbation. In honeſt 'truth, you ought to approve my choice, ſince you 'was every way the occaſion of my making it. What 'you ſaid of him, very greatly recommended him to 'my opinion; but he endeared himſelf to me moſt by 'what he ſaid of you. In ſhort, I have diſcovered, 'that he hath always loved you with ſuch a faithful, 'honeſt, noble, generous paſſion, that I was conſe-'quently convinced, his mind muſt poſſeſs all the in-'gredients of ſuch a paſſion; and what are theſe, but 'true honour, goodneſs, modeſty, bravery, tenderneſs, 'and, in a word, every human virtue? Forgive me, 'my dear; but I was uneaſy till I became myſelf the 'object of ſuch a paſſion.'

'And do you really think,' ſaid Amelia, ſmiling, 'that I ſhall forgive you robbing me of ſuch a lover? 'or, ſuppoſing what you banter me with was true, do 'you really imagine you could change ſuch a paſſion.'

'No, my dear,' anſwered the other; 'I only hope I 'have changed the object: for be aſſured, there is no 'greater vulgar error, than that it is impoſſible for a 'man who loves one woman, ever to love another. 'On the contrary, it is certain, that a man who can 'love one woman ſo well at a diſtance, will love another 'better that is nearer to him. Indeed, I have heard 'one of the beſt huſbands in the world declare, in the 'preſence of his wife, that he had always loved a prin-'ceſs with adoration. Theſe paſſions, which reſide 'only in very amorous, and very delicate minds, feed 'only on the delicacies there growing, and leave all the 'ſubſtantial food, and enough of the delicacy too, for 'the wife.'

The tea being now ready, Mrs. Bennet---or, if you pleaſe, for the future, Mrs. Atkinſon---propoſed to call in her huſband; but Amelia objected. She ſaid, ſhe ſhould be glad to ſee him any other time, but was then in the utmoſt hurry, as ſhe had been three hours abſent from all ſhe moſt loved; however, ſhe had ſcarce drank a diſh of tea before ſhe changed her mind; and

ſaying ſhe would not part man and wife, deſired Mr. Atkinſon might appear.

The maid anſwered, that her maſter was not at home; which words ſhe had ſcarce ſpoken, when he knocked haſtily at the door, and immediately came running into the room all pale and breathleſs; and addreſſing himſelf to Amelia, cried out, 'I am ſorry, my 'dear lady, to bring you ill news; but Captain Booth' ------ 'What! what! cries Amelia, dropping the tea-cup from her hand, 'is any thing the matter with 'him?'---'Don't be frightened, my dear lady,' ſaid the ſerjeant; 'he is in very good health; but a miſ-'fortune hath happened.'---'Are my children well?' ſaid Amelia. 'O, very well,' anſwered the ſerjeant. 'Pray, Madam, don't be frightened; I hope it will 'ſignify nothing: he is arreſted; but I hope to get 'him out of their damned hands immediately.'--- 'Where is he?' cries Amelia; 'I will go to him this 'inſtant!'---'He begs you will not,' anſwered the ſerjeant. 'I have ſent his lawyer to him, and am going 'back with Mrs. Elliſon this moment; but I beg your 'ladyſhip, for his ſake, and for your own ſake, not to 'go.'---'Mrs. Elliſon! what is Mrs. Elliſon to do?' cries Amelia. 'I muſt and will go.' Mrs. Atkinſon then interpoſed, and begged that ſhe would not hurry her ſpirits, but compoſe herſelf, and go home to her children, whither ſhe would attend her. She comforted her with the thoughts, that the captain was in no immediate danger; that ſhe could go to him when ſhe would; and deſired her to let the ſerjeant return with Mrs. Elliſon; ſaying, ſhe might be of ſervice, and that there was much wiſdom, and no kind of ſhame, in making uſe of bad people on certain occaſions.

'And who,' cries Amelia, a little come to herſelf, 'hath done this barbarous action?'

'One I am aſhamed to name,' cries the ſerjeant; 'indeed, I had always a very different opinion of him; I 'could not have believed any thing but my own ears

and

'and eyes; but Dr. Harriſon is the man who hath 'done the deed.'

'Dr. Harriſon!' cries Amelia. 'Well, then, there 'is an end of all goodneſs in the world. I will never 'have a good opinion of any human being more.'

The ſerjeant begged that he might not be detained from the captain; and that if Amelia pleaſed to go home, he would wait upon her. But ſhe did not chuſe to ſee Mrs. Elliſon at this time; and after a little conſideration, ſhe reſolved to ſtay where ſhe was; and Mrs. Atkinſon agreed to go and fetch her children to her, it being not many doors diſtant.

The ſerjeant then departed: Amelia, in her confuſion, never having once thought of wiſhing him joy on his marriage.

BOOK VIII.

CHAP. I.

Being the firſt Chapter of the eighth Book.

THE hiſtory muſt now look a little backward to thoſe circumſtances which led to the cataſtrophe mentioned at the end of the laſt book.

When Amelia went out in the morning, ſhe left her children to the care of her huſband. In this amiable office he had been engaged near an hour; and was at that very time lying along on the floor, and his little things crawling and playing about him, when a moſt violent knock was heard at the door; and immediately a footman, running up ſtairs, acquainted him, that his lady was taken violently ill, and carried into Mrs. Chenevix's toy-ſhop.

Booth no ſooner heard this account, which was delivered with great appearance of haſte and earneſtneſs, than he leaped ſuddenly from the floor, and leaving his children roaring at the news of their mother's illneſs, in ſtrict charge with his maid, he ran as faſt as his legs could carry him to the place: or towards the place rather; for before he arrived at the ſhop, a gentleman

ſtopped him full butt, crying, 'Captain, whither ſo faſt?' Booth anſwered eagerly, 'Whoever you are, 'friend, don't aſk me any queſtions now.'----'You 'muſt pardon me, captain,' anſwered the gentleman; 'but I have a little buſineſs with your honour. In 'ſhort, captain, I have a ſmall warrant here in my 'pocket againſt your honour, at the ſuit of one Dr. 'Harriſon.'---'You are a bailiff, then,' ſays Booth. 'I am an officer, Sir,' anſwered the other. 'Well, 'Sir, it is in vain to contend,' cries Booth; 'but let 'me beg you will permit me only to ſtep to Mrs. Che-'nevix's. I will attend you upon my honour, where-'ever you pleaſe, but my wife lies violently ill there.' ---'O, for that matter,' anſwered the bailiff, 'you 'may ſet your heart at eaſe. Your lady, I hope, is 'very well. I aſſure you, ſhe is not there; you will 'excuſe me, captain, theſe are only ſtratagems of war. '*Bolus and virtus, quis in a hoſteſs equirit?*---'Sir, I 'honour your learning,' cries Booth, 'and could al-'moſt kiſs you for what you tell me, I aſſure you, I 'would forgive you five hundred arreſts for ſuch a piece 'of news. Well, Sir, and whither am I to go with 'you?'---'O, any where; where your honour pleaſes,' cries the bailiff. 'Then ſuppoſe we go to Brown's 'coffee-houſe,' ſaid the priſoner. 'No,' anſwered the 'bailiff, 'that will not do; that's in the verge of the 'court.'---'Why, then, to the neareſt tavern,' ſaid Booth. 'No, not to a tavern,' cries the other; 'that 'is not a place of ſecurity; and you know, captain, 'your honour is a ſhy cock; I have been after your 'honour theſe three months. Come, Sir, you muſt 'go to my houſe, if you pleaſe.'---'With all my heart,' anſwered Booth, 'if it be any where hereabouts.'--- 'O, it is but a little way off,' replied the bailiff; 'it 'is only in Gray's Inn Lane, juſt by almoſt.' He then called a coach, and deſired his priſoner to walk in.

Booth entered the coach without any reſiſtance, which had he been inclined to make, he muſt have

plainly

plainly perceived would have been ineffectual, as the bailiff appeared to have ſeveral followers at hand, two of whom, beſide the commander in chief, mounted with him into the coach. As Booth was a ſweet-tempered man, as well as ſomewhat of a philoſopher, he behaved with all the good-humour imaginable, and indeed, with more than his companions; who, however, ſhewed him what they call civility---that is, they neither ſtruck him nor ſpit in his face.

Notwithſtanding the pleaſantry which Booth endeavoured to preſerve, he in reality envied every labourer whom he ſaw paſs by him in his way. The charms of liberty againſt his will ruſhed on his mind; and he could not avoid ſuggeſting to himſelf, how much more happy was the pooreſt wretch, who without controul could repair to his homely habitation, and to his family, compared to him, who was thus violently, and yet lawfully, torn away from the company of his wife and children! And their condition, eſpecially that of his Amelia, gave his heart many a ſevere and bitter pang.

At length he arrived at the bailiff's manſion, and was uſhered into a room in which were ſeveral perſons. Booth deſired to be alone; upon which the bailiff waited on him up ſtairs, into an apartment, the windows of which were well fortified with iron bars; but the walls had not the leaſt outwork raiſed before them; they were, indeed, what is generally called naked, the bricks having been only covered with a thin plaiſter, which in many places was mouldered away.

The firſt demand made upon Booth was for coach-hire, which amounted to two ſhillings, according to the bailiff's account; that being juſt double the legal fare. He was then aſked if he did not chuſe a bowl of punch; to which he having anſwered in the negative, the bailiff replied, 'Nay, Sir, juſt as you pleaſe. I 'don't aſk you to drink, if you don't chuſe it; but 'certainly you know the cuſtom; the houſe is full of 'priſoners, and I can't afford gentlemen a room to 'themſelves for nothing.'

Booth

Booth presently took this hint; indeed it was a pretty broad one; and told the bailiff he should not scruple to pay him his price; but, in fact, he never drank unless at his meals. 'As to that, Sir,' cries the bailiff, 'it 'is just as your honour pleases. I scorn to impose upon 'any gentleman in misfortunes: I wish you well out 'of them, for my part. Your honour can take no-'thing amiss of me; I only does my duty, what I am 'bound to do; and as you says you don't care to drink 'any thing, what will you be pleased to have for 'dinner?'

Booth then complied in bespeaking a dish of meat, and told the bailiff, he would drink a bottle with him after dinner. He then desired the favour of pen, ink, and paper, and a messenger; all which were immediately procured him, the bailiff telling him he might send wherever he pleased, and repeating his concern for Booth's misfortunes, and a hearty desire to see the end of them.

The messenger was just dispatched with the letter, when who should arrive but honest Atkinson. A soldier of the guards, belonging to the same company with the serjeant, and who had known Booth at Gibraltar, had seen the arrest, and heard the orders given to the coachman. This fellow accidentally meeting Atkinson, had acquainted him with the whole affair.

At the appearance of Atkinson, joy immediately overspread the countenance of Booth. The ceremonials which passed between them are unnecessary to be repeated. Atkinson was soon dispatched to the attorney, and to Mrs. Ellison, as the reader hath before heard from his own mouth.

Booth now greatly lamented that he had writ to his wife. He thought she might have been acquainted with the affair better by the serjeant. Booth begged him, however, to do every thing in his power to comfort her, to assure her that he was in perfect health, and good spirits, and to lessen, as much as possible, the concern

cern which he knew she would have at reading this letter.

The serjeant, however, as the reader hath seen, brought himself the first account of the arrest. Indeed, the other messenger did not arrive till a full hour afterwards. This was not owing to any slowness of his, but to many previous errands which he was to execute before the delivery of the letter; for, notwithstanding the earnest desire which the bailiff had declared to see Booth out of his troubles, he had ordered the porter, who was his follower, to call upon two or three other bailiffs, and as many attornies, to try to load his prisoner with as many actions as possible.

Here the reader may be apt to conclude, that the bailiff, instead of being a friend, was really an enemy to poor Booth; but, in fact, he was not so. His desire was no more than to accumulate bail-bonds; for the bailiff was reckoned an honest and good sort of man in his way, and had no more malice against the bodies in his custody, than a butcher hath to those in his: and as the latter, when he takes his knife in hand, hath no idea but of the joints into which he is to cut the carcase; so the former, when he handles his writ, hath no other design but to cut out the body into as many bail-bonds as possible. As to the life of the animal, or the liberty of the man, they are thoughts which never obtrude themselves on either.

CHAP. II.

Containing an Account of Mr. Booth's Fellow Sufferers.

BEFORE we return to Amelia, we must detain our reader a little longer with Mr. Booth, in the custody of Mr. Bondum, the bailiff, who now informed his prisoner, that he was welcome to the liberty of the house with the other gentlemen.

Booth asked who those gentlemen were. 'One of 'them, Sir,' says Mr. Bondum, 'is a very great wri-'ter or author, as they call him. He hath been here 'these five weeks, at the suit of a bookseller, for eleven 'pounds, odd money; but he expects to be discharged

'in

'in a day or two; for he hath writ out the debt. He 'is now writing for five or six booksellers, and he will 'get you sometimes, when he sits to it, a matter of fif- 'teen shillings a day: for he is a very good pen they 'say, but is apt to be idle. Some days he won't write 'above five hours; but at other times I have known 'him at it above sixteen.'---'Aye!' cries Booth, 'pray 'what are his productions? What doth he write?'--- 'Why sometimes,' answered Bondum, 'he writes you 'history books for your numbers, and sometimes your 'verses, your poems, what do you call them? And 'then again he writes news for your newspapers.'--- 'Aye, indeed! he is a most extraordinary man truly. 'How doth he get his news here?'---'Why he makes 'it, as he doth your parliament speeches for your ma- 'gazines. He reads them to us sometimes over a 'bowl of punch. To be sure, it is all one as if one 'was in the parliament-house. It is about liberty and 'freedom, and about the constitution of England. I 'say nothing for my part, for I will keep my neck 'out of a halter: but, faith, he makes it out plainly 'to me, that all matters are not as they should be. I 'am all for liberty, for my part.'---Is that so consist- 'ent with your calling,' cries Booth. 'I thought, 'my friend, you had lived by depriving men of their 'liberty.'---'That's another matter,' cries the bailiff; 'That's all according to law, and in the way of busi- 'ness. To be sure, men must be obliged to pay their 'debts, or else there would be an end of every thing.' Booth desired the bailiff to give him his opinion of liberty. Upon which he hesitated a moment, and then cried out, 'O, it is a fine thing, it is a very fine thing, 'and the constitution of England.' Booth told him, that by the old constitution of England he had heard that men could not be arrested for debt; to which the bailiff answered, that must have been in very bad times. 'Because as why,' says he, 'would it not be the 'hardest thing in the world if a man could not arrest 'another for a just and lawful debt?' Besides, Sir,

'you

'you must be mistaken: for how could that ever be? 'Is not liberty the constitution of England? Well, 'and is not the constitution, as a man may say--- 'whereby the constitution, that is the law and liberty, 'and all that-----.'

Booth had a little mercy upon the poor bailiff, when he found him rounding in this manner, and told him he had made the matter very clear. Booth then proceeded to enquire after the other gentlemen, his fellows in affliction; upon which Bondum acquainted him that one of the prisoners was a poor fellow. 'He calls himself a gentleman,' said Bondum; 'but I am sure I 'never saw any thing genteel by him. In a week that 'he hath been in my house, he hath drank only part of 'one bottle of wine. I intend to carry him to Newgate 'within a day or two, if he cannot find bail, which I 'suppose he will not be able to do, for every body 'says he is an undone man. He hath run out all he 'hath by losses in business, and one way or other: and 'he hath a wife and seven children. Here was the 'whole family here the other day, all howling toge-'ther. I never saw such a beggarly crew: I was al-'most ashamed to see them in my house. I thought 'they seemed fitter for Bridewell than any other place. 'To be sure, I do not reckon him as proper company 'for such as you, Sir; but there is another prisoner in 'the house that I dare say you will like very much. 'He is, indeed, very much of a gentleman, and spends 'his money like one. I have had him only three days, 'and I am afraid he won't stay much longer. They 'say, indeed, he is a gamester; but what is that 'to me or any one, as long as a man appears as a gen-'tleman? I always love to speak by people as I find. 'And in my opinion, he is fit company for the greatest 'lord in the land; for he hath very good clothes, 'and money enough. He is not here for debt, but 'upon a judge's warrant for an assault and battery; 'for the tipstaff locks up here.'

The bailiff was thus haranguing, when he was interrupted

rupted by the arrival of the attorney, whom the truſty ſerjeant had, with the utmoſt expedition, found out, and diſpatched to the relief of his diſtreſſed friend. But before we proceed any farther with the captain, we will return to poor Amelia; for whom, conſidering the ſituation in which we left her, the good-natured reader may be, perhaps, in no ſmall degree ſolicitous.

CHAP. III.

Containing ſome extraordinary Behaviour in Mrs. Elliſon.

THE ſerjeant being departed to convey Mrs. Elliſon to the captain, his wife went to fetch Amelia's children to their mother.

Amelia's concern for the diſtreſſes of her huſband was aggravated at the ſight of her children. 'Good hea-'vens!' ſhe cried, 'what will, what can become of 'theſe poor little wretches! Why have I produced 'theſe little creatures, only to give them a ſhare of 'poverty and miſery!' At which words ſhe embraced them eagerly in her arms, and bedewed them both with her tears.

The children's eyes ſoon overflowed as faſt as their mother's, though neither of them knew the cauſe of her affliction. The little boy, who was the elder, and much the ſharper of the two, imputed the agonies of his mother to her illneſs, according to the account brought to his father in his preſence.

When Amelia became acquainted with the child's apprehenſions, ſhe ſoon ſatisfied him that ſhe was in a perfect ſtate of health; at which the little thing expreſſed great ſatisfaction, and ſaid he was glad ſhe was well again. Amelia told him ſhe had not been in the leaſt diſordered. Upon which the innocent cried out, 'La! how can people tell ſuch fibs! A great tall man 'told my papa you was taken very ill at Mrs. Some-'body's ſhop; and my poor papa preſently ran down 'ſtairs, I was afraid he would have broken his neck to 'come to you.'

'O the villains!' cries Mrs. Atkinſon; 'what a 'ſtratagem was here to take away your huſband!'

'Take

COOKE's POCKET EDITION OF SELECT NOVELS.

R. Corbould del. Engrav'd for C. Cooke, Saint's Row, Nov.r 23. 1793. J. Saunders, sc.

2 JY 58

'Take away!' anſwered the child: what, hath any 'body taken away papa? Surely that naughty fibbing 'man hath not taken away papa?'

Amelia begged Mrs. Atkinſon to ſay ſomething to her children, for that her ſpirits were overpowered. She then threw herſelf into a chair, and gave a full vent to a paſſion almoſt too ſtrong for her delicate conſtitution.

The ſcene that followed, during ſome minutes, is beyond my power of deſcription; I muſt beg the readers hearts to ſuggeſt it to themſelves. The children hung on the mother, whom they endeavoured in vain to comfort; as Mrs. Atkinſon did in vain attempt to pacify them, telling them all would be well, and they would ſoon ſee their papa again.

At length, partly by the perſuaſions of Mr. Atkinſon, partly from conſideration of her little ones, and more, perhaps, from the relief which ſhe had acquired by her tears, Amelia became a little compoſed.

Nothing worth notice paſſed in this miſerable company from this time till the return of Mrs. Elliſon from the bailiff's houſe; and to draw out ſcenes of wretchedneſs to too great a length, is a taſk very uneaſy to the writer, and for which none but readers of a moſt gloomy complexion will think themſelves ever obliged to his labours.

At length Mrs. Elliſon arrived, and entered the room with an air of gaiety rather miſbecoming the occaſion. When ſhe had ſeated herſelf in a chair, ſhe told Amelia that the captain was very well, and in good ſpirits, and that he earneſtly deſired her to keep up her's. 'Come, Madam,' ſaid ſhe, 'don't be diſconſolate; I hope we ſhall ſoon be able to get him out 'of his troubles. The debts, indeed, amount to more 'than I expected; however, ways muſt be found to 'redeem him. He muſt own himſelf guilty of ſome 'raſhneſs in going out of the verge, when he knew to 'what he was liable; but that is not to be remedied. 'If he had followed my advice, this had not happened; 'but men will be headſtrong.

'I cannot bear this,' cries Amelia; 'shall I hear that 'best of creatures blamed for his tenderness to me!'

'Well, I will not blame him,' answered Mrs. Ellison; 'I am sure I propose nothing but to serve him: 'and if you will do as much to serve him yourself, he 'will not long be a prisoner.'

'I do?' cries Amelia; 'Oh, heavens! is there a 'thing upon earth---'

'Yes, there is a thing upon earth,' said Mrs. Ellison, 'and a very easy thing too: and yet I will ven-'ture my life you start when I propose it. And yet 'when I consider that you are a woman of understand-'ing, I know not why I should think so; for sure 'you have too much good sense to imagine that you can 'cry your husband out of prison. If this would have 'done, I see you have almost cried your eyes out al-'ready. And yet you may do the business by a much 'pleasanter way than by crying and bawling.'

'What do you mean, Madam?' cries Amelia. 'For my part, I cannot guess your meaning.'

'Before I tell you, then, Madam,' answered Mrs. Ellison, 'I must inform you, if you do not already 'know it, that the captain is charged with actions to 'the amount of near five hundred pounds. I am sure 'I would willingly be his bail; but I know my bail 'would not be taken for that sum. You must consi-'der, therefore, Madam, what chance you have of 'redeeming him; unless you chuse, as perhaps some 'wives would, that he should lie all his life in prison.'

At these words Amelia discharged a flood of tears, and gave every mark of the most frantic grief.

'Why there, now,' cries Mrs. Ellison; 'while you 'will indulge these extravagant passions, how can 'you be capable of listening to the voice of reason? I 'know I am a fool in concerning myself thus with the 'affairs of others. I know the thankless office I un-'dertake; and yet I love you so, my dear Mrs. Booth, 'that I cannot bear to see you afflicted, and I would 'comfort you, if you would suffer me. Let me beg

'you

'you to make your mind easy; and within these two 'days I will engage to set your husband at liberty.

'Hark'e, child: only behave like a woman of spirit 'this evening, and keep your appointment notwith-'standing what hath happened, and I am convinced 'there is one who hath the power and the will to serve 'you.'

Mrs. Ellison spoke the latter part of her speech in a whisper; so that Mrs. Atkinson, who was then engaged with the children, might not hear her; but Amelia answered aloud, and said, 'What appointment 'would you have me keep this evening?'

'Nay, nay, if you have forgot,' cries Mrs. Ellison, 'I will tell you more another time; but come, will 'you go home? My dinner is ready by this time, and 'you shall dine with me.'

'Talk not to me of dinners,' cries Amelia; 'my 'stomach is too full already.'

'Nay, but, dear Madam,' answered Mrs. Ellison, 'let me beseech you to go home with me!---I do not 'care,' says she, whispering, 'to speak before some 'folks.'

'I have no secret, Madam, in the world,' replied Amelia aloud, 'which I would not communicate to 'this lady; for I shall always acknowledge the highest 'obligations to her for the secrets she hath imparted 'to me.'

'Madam,' said Mrs. Ellison, 'I do not interfere 'with obligations, I am glad the lady hath obliged you 'so much; and I wish all people were equally mindful 'of obligations. I hope I have omitted no opportu-'nity of endeavouring to oblige Mrs. Booth, as well 'as I have some other folks.'

'If, by other folks, Madam, you mean me,' cries Mrs. Atkinson, 'I confess, I sincerely believe you in-'tended the same obligation to us both; and I have 'the pleasure to think it is owing to me that this lady 'is not as much obliged to you as I am.'

'I proteſt, Madam, I can hardly gueſs your meaning,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon. 'Do you really intend to affront me, Madam?'

'I intend to preſerve innocence and virtue, if it be in my power, Madam,' anſwered the other: 'and ſure nothing but the moſt eager reſolution to deſtroy it, could induce you to mention ſuch an appointment at ſuch a time.'

'I did not expect this treatment from you, Madam,' cries Mrs. Elliſon: 'ſuch ingratitude I could not have believed, had it been reported to me by any other.'

'Such impudence,' anſwered Mrs. Atkinſon, 'muſt exceed, I think, all belief; but when women once abandon that modeſty which is the characteriſtic of their ſex, they ſeldom ſet any bounds to their aſſurance.'

'I could not have believed this to have been in human nature,' cries Mrs. Elliſon. 'Is this the woman whom I have fed, have cloathed, have ſupported? who owes to my charity, and my interceſſions, that ſhe is not at this day deſtitute of all the neceſſaries of life!'

'I own it all,' anſwered Mrs. Atkinſon: 'and I add the favour of a maſquerade-ticket to the number. Could I have thought, Madam, that you would, before my face, have aſked another lady to go to the ſame place, with the ſame man! But I aſk your pardon; I impute rather more aſſurance to you than you are miſtreſs of. You have endeavoured to keep the aſſignation a ſecret from me; and it was by mere accident only that I diſcovered it, unleſs there are ſome guardian angels that in general protect innocence and virtue, though I may ſay I have not always found them ſo watchful.'

'Indeed, Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Elliſon, 'you are not worth my anſwer, nor will I ſtay a moment longer with ſuch a perſon.---So, Mrs. Booth, you have your choice, Madam, whether you will go with me, or remain in the company of this lady.'

'If ſo, Madam, anſwered Mrs. Booth, 'I ſhall not be long in determining to ſtay where I am.'

Mrs.

Mrs. Elliſon then caſting a look of great indignation at both the ladies, made a ſhort ſpeech full of invectives againſt Mrs. Atkinſon, and not without oblique hints of ingratitude againſt poor Amelia; after which, ſhe burſt out of the room, and out of the houſe; and made haſte to her own home, in a condition of mind to which fortune, without guilt, cannot, I believe, reduce any one.

Indeed, how much the ſuperiority of miſery is on the ſide of wickedneſs, may appear to ever reader who will compare the preſent ſituation of Amelia with that of Mrs. Elliſon. Fortune had attacked the former with almoſt the higheſt degree of her malice. She was involved in a ſcene of moſt exquiſite diſtreſs; and her huſband, her principal comfort, torn violently from her arms; yet her ſorrow, however exquiſite, was all ſoft and tender; nor was ſhe without many conſolations. Her caſe, however hard, was not abſolutely deſperate: for ſcarce any condition of fortune can be ſo. Art and induſtry, chance and friends, have often relieved the moſt diſtreſſed circumſtances, and converted them into opulence. In all theſe ſhe had hopes on this ſide the grave, and perfect virtue and innocence gave her the ſtrongeſt aſſurances on the other; whereas, in the boſom of Mrs. Elliſon all was ſtorm and tempeſt; anger, revenge, fear, and pride, like ſo many raging furies, poſſeſſed her mind, and tortured her with diſappointment and ſhame. Loſs of reputation, which is generally irreparable, was to be her lot: loſs of friends is of this the certain conſequence: all on this ſide the grave appeared dreary and comfortleſs; and endleſs miſery, on the other, cloſed the gloomy proſpect.

Hence, my worthy reader, conſole thyſelf, that however few of the other good things of life are thy lot, the beſt of all things, which is innocence, is always within thy own power; and though fortune may make thee often unhappy, ſhe can never make thee compleatly and irreparably miſerable without thy own conſent.

CHAP. IV.

Containing among many Matters, the exemplary Behaviour of Colonel James.

WHEN Mrs. Elliſon was departed, Mrs. Atkinſon began to apply all her art to ſoothe and comfort Amelia, but was preſently prevented by her. 'I am 'aſhamed, dear Madam,' ſaid Amelia, 'of having in-'dulged my affliction ſo much at your expence. The 'ſuddenneſs of the occaſion is my only excuſe; for had 'I had time to ſummon my reſolution to my aſſiſtance, I 'hope I am miſtreſs of more patience than you have 'hitherto ſeen me exert. I know, Madam, in my un-'warrantable exceſſes I have been guilty of many tranſ-'greſſions. Firſt, againſt that Divine will and plea-'ſure, without whoſe permiſſion at leaſt no human ac-'cident can happen; in the next place, Madam, if 'any thing can aggravate ſuch a fault, I have tranſ-'greſſed the laws of friendſhip, as well as decency, in 'throwing upon you ſome part of the load of my 'grief; and again, I have ſinned againſt common ſenſe, 'which ſhould teach me, inſtead of weakly and heavily 'lamenting my misfortunes, to rouze all my ſpirits to 'remove them. In this light, I am ſhocked at my 'own folly, and am reſolved to leave my children un-'der your care, and go directly to my huſband. I 'may comfort him; I may aſſiſt him; I may relieve 'him. There is nothing now too difficult for me to 'undertake.'

Mrs. Atkinſon greatly approved and complimented her friend on all the former part of her ſpeech, except what related to herſelf, on which ſhe ſpoke very civilly, and I believe with great truth; but as to her going to her huſband, ſhe endeavoured to diſſuade her, at leaſt ſhe begged her to defer it for the preſent, and till the ſerjeant returned home. She then reminded Amelia, that it was now paſt five in the afternoon, and that ſhe had not taken any refreſhment but a diſh of tea the whole day, and deſired ſhe would give her leave to procure her a chick, or any thing ſhe liked better, for her dinner.

Amelia

Amelia thanked her friend, and ſaid ſhe would ſit down with her to whatever ſhe pleaſed. 'But if I do 'not eat,' ſaid ſhe, 'I would not have you impute it 'to any thing but want of appetite: for I aſſure you, 'all things are equally indifferent to me. I am more 'ſolicitous about theſe poor little things, who have not 'been uſed to faſt ſo long. Heaven knows what may 'hereafter be their fate!'

Mrs. Atkinſon bid her hope the beſt, and then recommended the children to the care of her maid.

And now arrived a ſervant from Mrs. James, with an invitation to Captain Booth and his lady, to dine with the colonel the day after the next. This a little perplexed Amelia; but after a ſhort conſideration ſhe diſpatched an anſwer to Mrs. James, in which ſhe conciſely informed her of what had happened.

The honeſt ſerjeant, who had been on his legs almoſt the whole day, now returned, and brought Amelia a ſhort letter from her huſband; in which he gave her the moſt ſolemn aſſurances of his health and ſpirits, and begged her, with great earneſtneſs, to take care to preſerve her own; which if ſhe did, he ſaid he had no doubt but that they ſhould ſhortly be happy. He added ſomething of hopes from my lord, with which Mrs. Elliſon had amuſed him; and which ſerved only to deſtroy the comfort that Amelia received from the reſt of his letter.

Whilſt Amelia, the ſerjeant, and his lady, were engaged in a cold collation, for which purpoſe a cold chick was procured from the tavern for the ladies, and two pounds of cold beef for the ſerjeant, a violent knocking was heard at the door; and preſently afterwards Colonel James entered the room. After proper compliments had paſt, the colonel told Amelia, that her letter was brought to Mrs. James while they were at table, and that on her ſhewing it him, he had immediately roſe up, made an apology to his company, and took a chair to her. He ſpoke to her with great tender-

neſs

neſs on the occaſion, and deſired her to make herſelf eaſy; aſſuring her, that he would leave nothing in his power undone to ſerve her huſband. He then gave her an invitation, in his wife's name, to his own houſe, in the moſt preſſing manner.

Amelia returned him very hearty thanks for all his kind offers; but begged to decline that of an apartment in his houſe. She ſaid, as ſhe could not leave her children, ſo neither could ſhe think of bringing ſuch a trouble with her into his family; and though the colonel gave her many aſſurances that her children, as well as herſelf, would be very welcome to Mrs. James, and even betook himſelf to entreaties, ſhe ſtill perſiſted obſtinately in her refuſal.

In real truth, Amelia had taken a vaſt affection for Mrs. Atkinſon, the comfort of whoſe company ſhe could not bear to be deprived of in her diſtreſs: nor to exchange it for that of Mrs. James, to whom ſhe had lately conceived no little diſlike.

The colonel, when he found he could not prevail with Amelia to accept his invitation, deſiſted from any farther ſolicitations. He then took a bank bill of fifty pounds from his pocket book, and ſaid, 'You will 'pardon me, dear Madam, if I chuſe to impute 'your refuſal of my houſe rather to a diſlike of my 'wife, who I will not pretend to be the moſt agreeable 'of women---(all men,' ſaid he, ſighing, 'have not 'Captain Booth's fortune!)---than to any averſion or 'anger to me. I muſt inſiſt upon it, therefore, to 'make your preſent habitation as eaſy to you as poſ-'ſible. I hope, Madam, you will not deny me this 'happineſs; I beg you will honour me with the ac-'ceptance of this trifle.' He then put the note into her hand, and declared that the honour of touching it was worth a hundred times that ſum.

'I proteſt, Colonel James,' cried Amelia, bluſhing, 'I know not what to do or ſay, your goodneſs ſo greatly 'confounds me. Can I, who am ſo well acquainted 'with the many great obligations Mr. Booth already

'hath

'hath to your generoſity, conſent that you ſhould add 'more to a debt we never can pay?-----'

The colonel ſtopped her ſhort, proteſting that ſhe miſplaced the obligation; for that if to confer the higheſt happineſs was to oblige, he was obliged to her acceptance. 'And I do aſſure you, Madam,' ſaid he, 'if this trifling ſum, or a much larger, can contribute 'to your eaſe, I ſhall conſider myſelf as the happieſt 'man upon earth, in being able to ſupply it; and you, 'Madam, my greateſt benefactor in receiving it.'

Amelia then put the note in her pocket; and they entered into a converſation, in which many civil things were ſaid on both ſides: but what was chiefly worth remark was, that Amelia had her huſband almoſt conſtantly in her mouth, and the colonel never mentioned him. The former ſeemed deſirous to lay all obligations, as much as poſſible, to the account of her huſband; and the latter endeavoured, with the utmoſt delicacy, to inſinuate that her happineſs was the main, and, indeed, only point, which he had in view.

Amelia had made no doubt, at the colonel's firſt appearance, but that he intended to go directly to her huſband. When he dropped, therefore, a hint of his intention to viſit him next morning, ſhe appeared viſibly ſhocked at the delay. The colonel perceiving this, ſaid, 'However inconvenient it may be, yet, Madam, 'if it will oblige you, or if you deſire it, I will even go 'to-night.' Amelia anſwered: 'My huſband would 'be far from deſiring to derive any good from your in'convenience, but if you put it to me, I muſt be ex'cuſed for ſaying, I deſire nothing more in the world 'than to ſend him ſo great a comfort as I know he will 'receive from the preſence of ſuch a friend.'---'Then, 'to ſhew you, Madam,' cries the colonel, 'that I de'ſire nothing more in the world than to give you plea'ſure, I will go to him immediately.'

Amelia then bethought herſelf of the ſerjeant; and told the colonel, his old acquaintance Atkinſon, whom he had known at Gibraltar, was then in the houſe, and would

would conduct him to the place. The ſerjeant was immediately called in, paid his reſpects to the colonel, and was acknowledged by him. They both immediately ſet forward; Amelia to the utmoſt of her power preſſing their departure.

Mrs. Atkinſon now returned to Amelia, and was by her acquainted with the colonel's late generoſity; for her heart ſo boiled over with gratitude, that ſhe could not conceal the ebullition. Amelia likewiſe gave her friend a full narrative of the colonel's former behaviour and friendſhip to her huſband, as well abroad as in England; and ended with declaring, that ſhe believed him to be the moſt generous man upon earth.

Mrs. Atkinſon agreed with Amelia's concluſion; and ſaid, ſhe was glad to hear there was any ſuch man. They then proceeded with the children to the tea-table, where panegyric, and not ſcandal, was the topic of their converſation; and of this panegyric, the colonel was the ſubject, both the ladies ſeeming to vie with each other in celebrating the praiſes of his goodneſs.

CHAP. V.

Comments upon Authors.

HAVING left Amelia in as comfortable a ſituation as could poſſibly be expected, her immediate diſtreſſes relieved, and her heart filled with great hopes from the friendſhip of the colonel; we will now return to Booth, who, when the attorney and ſerjeant had left him, received a viſit from that great author of whom honourable mention is made in our ſecond chapter.

Booth, as the reader may be pleaſed to remember, was a pretty good maſter of the claſſics; for his father, though he deſigned his ſon for the army, did not think it neceſſary to breed him up a blockhead. He did not, perhaps, imagine that a competent ſhare of Latin and Greek would make his ſon either a pedant or a coward. He conſidered likewiſe, probably, that the life of a ſoldier is in general a life of idleneſs; and might think that the ſpare hours of an officer in country quarters would be as well employed with a book, as in ſaunter-

ing

ing about the ſtreets, loitering in a coffee-houſe, ſotting in a tavern, or in laying ſchemes to debauch and ruin a ſet of harmleſs, ignorant country girls.

As Booth was, therefore, what might well be called, in this age at leaſt, a man of learning, he began to diſcourſe our author on ſubjects of literature. 'I think, 'Sir,' ſays he, 'that Doctor Swift hath been generally 'allowed, by the critics in this kingdom, to be the 'greateſt maſter of humour that ever wrote. Indeed 'I allow him to have poſſeſſed moſt admirable talents 'of this kind; and if Rabelais was his maſter, I 'think he proves the truth of the common Greek pro-'verb, that the ſcholar is often ſuperior to the maſter. 'As to Cervantes, I do not think we can make any 'juſt compariſon; for though Mr. Pope compliments 'him with ſometimes taking Cervantes' ſerious air---' 'I remember the paſſage,' cries the author:

'O thou, whatever title pleaſe thine ear,
'Dean, Drapier, Bickerſtaff, or Gulliver;
'Whether you take Cervantes' ſerious air,
'Or laugh and ſhake in Rabelais' eaſy-chair.'

'You are right, Sir,' ſaid Booth; but though I 'ſhould agree that the doctor hath ſometimes conde-'ſcended to imitate Rabelais, I do not remember to 'have ſeen in his works the leaſt attempt in the man-'ner of Cervantes. But there is one in his own way, 'and whom I am convinced he ſtudied above all others: 'you gueſs, I believe, I am going to name Lucian. 'This author, I ſay, I am convinced he followed: 'but I think he followed him at a diſtance; as, to ſay 'the truth, every other writer of this kind hath done 'in my opinion; for none, I think, hath yet equalled 'him. I agree, indeed, entirely with Mr. Moile, in 'his diſcourſe on the age of the Philopatris, when he 'gives him the epithet of the Incomparable Lucian; 'and incomparable I believe, he will remain, as long 'as the language in which he wrote ſhall endure. 'What an inimitable piece of humour is his Cock!' 'I remember it very well,' cries the author; 'his

'ſtory

'ſtory of a Cock and a Bull is excellent.' Booth ſtared at this, and aſked the author what he meant by the bull. 'Nay,' anſwered he, 'I don't know very 'well, upon my ſoul. It is a long time ſince I read 'him. I learned him all over at ſchool, I have not 'read him much ſince.'---'And pray, Sir,' ſaid he, 'how do you like his Pharſalia? Don't you think 'Mr. Rowe's tranſlation a very fine one!' Booth replied, 'I believe we are talking of different authors. 'The Pharſalia which Mr. Rowe tranſlated, was written by *Lucan*; but I have been ſpeaking of Lucian, 'a Greek writer, and, in my opinion, the greateſt in 'the humorous way that ever the world produced.'--- 'Aye!' cries the author, he was indeed ſo, a very excellent writer, indeed. I fancy a tranſlation of him would 'ſell very well.' I do not know, indeed,' cries Booth. 'A good tranſlation of him would be a valuable book. 'I have ſeen a wretched one, publiſhed by Mr. Dryden, 'but tranſlated by others, who in many places have 'miſunderſtood Lucian's meaning, and have no where 'preſerved the ſpirit of the original.'---'That is great 'pity,' ſays the author. 'Pray, Sir, is he well tran'ſlated into French?' Booth anſwered, he could not tell; but that he doubted it very much, having never ſeen a good verſion into that language, out of the Greek. 'To confeſs the truth, I believe, ſaid he, 'the French tranſlators have generally conſulted the 'Latin only; which, in ſome of the few Greek writers 'I have read, is tolerably bad. And as the Engliſh 'tranſlators for the moſt part, purſue the French, we 'may eaſily gueſs, what ſpirit thoſe copies of bad 'copies muſt preſerve of the original.

'Egad, you are a ſhrewd gueſſer,' cries the author. 'I am glad the bookſellers have not your ſagacity. 'But how ſhould it be otherwiſe, conſidering the price 'they pay by the ſheet? The Greek, you will allow, 'is a hard language; and there are few gentlemen that 'write, who can read it without a good lexicon. Now, Sir, if we were to afford time to find out the true meaning

'of

'of words, a gentleman would not get bread and cheese 'by his work. If one was to be paid, indeed, as Mr. 'Pope was for his Homer-----Pray, Sir, don't you 'think that the best translation in the world?'

'Indeed, Sir,' cries Booth, 'I think, though it is cer-'tainly a noble paraphrase, and of itself a fine poem, yet, 'in some places, it is no translation at all. In the very 'beginning, for instance, he hath not rendered the true 'force of the author. Homer invokes his Muse in the 'five first lines of the Iliad; and, at the end of the fifth, 'he gives his reason---

'Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή.

'For all these things,' says he, 'were brought about 'by the decree of Jupiter; and, therefore, he supposes 'their true sources are known only to the deities. 'Now, the translation takes no more notice of the ΔΕ, 'than if no such word had been there.'

'Very possibly,' answered the author; 'it is a long 'time since I read the original. Perhaps, then, he 'followed the French translations. I observe, indeed, 'he talks much in the notes of Madam Dacier, and 'Monsieur Eustathius.'

Booth had now received conviction enough of his friend's knowledge of the Greek language; without attempting, therefore, to set him right, be made a sudden transition to the Latin. 'Pray, Sir,' said he, 'as you 'have mentioned Rowe's translation of the Pharsalia, 'do you remember how he hath rendered that passage 'in the character of Cato?

'-----*Veneriſque huic maximus uſus*
'*Progenies; urbi pater eſt, urbique maritus.*

'For I apprehend that passage is generally misunder-'stood.'

'I really do not remember,' answered the author. 'Pray, Sir, what do you take to be the meaning:'

'I apprehend, Sir,' replied Booth, 'that by these 'words, *urbi pater eſt, urbique maritus*, Cato is re-

'presented as the father and the husband of the city of 'Rome.'

'Very true, Sir,' cries the author; 'very fine in-'deed! Not only the father of his country, but the 'husband too; very noble, truly!'

'Pardon me, Sir,' cries Booth; 'I do not conceive 'that to have been Lucan's meaning. If you please 'to observe the context: Lucan, having commended 'the temperance of Cato, in the instances of diet and 'clothes, proceeds to venereal pleasures; of which, 'says the poet, his principal use was procreation; then 'he adds, *urbi pater est*, *urbique maritus*; that he be-'came a father and a husband, for the sake only of the 'city.'

'Upon my word, that's true,' cries the author: 'I 'did not think of it. It is much finer than the other. '*Urbis pater est*---what is the other?---aye---*urbis ma-'ritus*. It is certainly as you say, Sir.'

Booth was by this pretty well satisfied of the author's profound learning; however, he was willing to try him a little farther. He asked him, therefore, what was his opinion of Lucan in general, and in what class of writers he ranked him.

The author stared a little at this question; and, after some hesitation, answered, 'Certainly, Sir, I think 'he is a fine writer, and a very great poet.'

'I am very much of the same opinion,' cries Booth; 'but where do you class him? next to what poet do 'you place him?'

'Let me see,' cries the author, 'where do I class 'him!---next to whom do I place him!----Aye!---- 'why!---why---pray, where do you yourself place 'him?'

'Why surely,' cries Booth, 'if he is not to be 'placed in the first rank, with Homer and Virgil, and 'Milton; I think clearly, he is at the head of the se-'cond; before either Statius, or Silius Italicus--- 'though I allow to each of these their merits; but, 'perhaps, an epic poem was beyond the genius of 'either.

'either. I own, I have often thought, if Statius had 'ventured no farther than Ovid or Claudian, he would 'have ſucceeded better; for his Sylvæ are, in my opi-'nion much better than his Thebais.'

'I believe, I was of the ſame opinion formerly,' ſaid the author.

'And for what reaſon have you altered it?' cries Booth.

'I have not altered it,' anſwered the author; 'but, 'to tell you the truth, I have not any opinion at all 'about theſe matters at preſent. I do not trouble my 'head much with poetry: for there is no encourage-'ment to ſuch ſtudies in this age. It is true, indeed, 'I have now and then wrote a poem or two for the ma-'gazines; but I never intend to write any more; for 'a gentleman is not paid for his time. A ſheet is a 'ſheet with the bookſellers; and, whether it be in 'proſe or verſe, they make no difference; though cer-'tainly there is as much difference to a gentleman in 'the work, as there is to a taylor, between making a 'plain and a laced ſuit. Rhimes are difficult things; 'they are ſtubborn things, Sir. I have been ſome-'times longer in tagging a couplet, than I have been 'in writing a ſpeech on the ſide of the oppoſition. 'which hath been read with great applauſe all over 'the kingdom.'

'I am glad you are pleaſed to confirm that,' cries Booth: 'for I proteſt, it was an entire ſecret to me till 'this day. I was ſo perfectly ignorant, that I thought 'the ſpeeches, publiſhed in the magazines, were really 'made by the members themſelves.'

'Some of them, and I believe I may without vanity 'ſay the beſt,' cries the author, 'are all the produc-'tion of my own pen; but, I believe, I ſhall leave it 'off ſoon, unleſs a ſheet of ſpeech will fetch more than 'it does at preſent. In truth, the romance writing is 'the only branch of our buſineſs now that is worth 'following. Goods of that ſort have had ſo much 'ſucceſs lately in the market, that a bookſeller ſcarce

'cares what he bids for them. And it is certainly the 'eaſieſt work in the world; you may write it almoſt as 'faſt as you can ſet pen to paper; and if you interlard 'it with a little ſcandal, a little abuſe on ſome living 'characters of note, you cannot fail of ſucceſs.'

'Upon my word, Sir,' cries Booth, 'you have 'greatly inſtructed me. I could not have imagined 'there had been ſo much regularity in the trade of wri-'ting as you are pleaſed to mention: by what I can 'perceive, the pen and ink is likely to become the ſta-'ple commodity of the kingdom.'

'Alas, Sir!' anſwered the author, 'it is over-'ſtocked. The market is over-ſtocked. There is no 'encouragement to merit, no patrons. I have been 'theſe five years ſoliciting a ſubſcription for my new 'tranſlation of Ovid's Metamorphoſes; with notes ex-'planatory, hiſtorical, and critical; and I have ſcarce 'collected five hundred names yet.'

The mention of this tranſlation a little ſurprized Booth; not only as the author had juſt declared his intentions to forſake the tuneful muſes; but for ſome other reaſons, which he had collected from his converſation with our author, he little expected to hear of a propoſal to tranſlate any of the Latin poets. He proceeded, therefore, to catechiſe him a little farther: and by his anſwers was fully ſatisfied, that he had the very ſame acquaintance with Ovid, that he had appeared to have with Lucan.

The author then pulled out a bundle of papers, containing propoſals for his ſubſcription, and receipts: and addreſſing himſelf to Booth, ſaid, 'Though the 'place in which we meet, Sir, is an improper place to 'ſolicit favours of this kind; yet, perhaps, it may be 'in your power to ſerve me, if you will charge your 'pockets with ſome of theſe.' Booth was juſt offering at an excuſe, when the bailiff introduced Colonel James and the ſerjeant.

The unexpected viſit of a beloved friend to a man in affliction, eſpecially in Mr. Booth's ſituation, is a com-

fort

fact which can ſcarce be equalled; not barely from the hopes of relief, or redreſs by his aſſiſtance, but as it is an evidence of ſincere friendſhip, which ſcarce admits of any doubt or ſuſpicion. Such an inſtance doth, indeed, make a man amends for all ordinary troubles and diſtreſſes; and we ought to think ourſelves gainers, by having had ſuch an opportunity of diſcovering, that we are poſſeſſed of one of the moſt valuable of all human poſſeſſions.

Booth was ſo tranſported at the ſight of the colonel, that he dropped the propoſals which the author had put into his hand, and burſt forth into the higheſt profeſſions of gratitude to his friend, who behaved very properly on his ſide, and ſaid every thing which became the mouth of a friend on the occaſion.

It is true, indeed, he ſeemed not moved equally either with Booth or the ſerjeant, both whoſe eyes watered at the ſcene. In truth, the colonel, though a very generous man, had not the leaſt grain of tenderneſs in his diſpoſition. His mind was formed of thoſe firm materials, of which Nature formerly hammered out the Stoic, and upon which the ſorrows of no man living could make an impreſſion. A man of this temper, who doth not much value danger, will fight for the perſon he calls his friend; and the man that hath but little value for his money will give it him; but ſuch friendſhip is never to be abſolutely depended on; for whenever the favourite paſſion interpoſes with it, it is ſure to ſubſide, and vaniſh into air. Whereas the man, whoſe tender diſpoſition really feels the miſeries of another, will endeavour to relieve them for his own ſake; and, in ſuch a mind, friendſhip will often get the ſuperiority over every other paſſion.

But from whatever motive it ſprung, the colonel's behaviour to Booth ſeemed truly amiable; and ſo it appeared to the author, who took the firſt occaſion to applaud it in a very florid oration; which the reader, when he recollects that he was a ſpeech maker by profeſſion will not be ſurprized at; nor, perhaps, will be

much more ſurprized, that he ſoon after took an occaſion of clapping a propoſal into the colonel's hands; holding, at the ſame time, a receipt very viſible in his own.

The colonel received both, and gave the author a guinea in exchange, which was double the ſum mentioned in the receipt; for which the author made a low bow, and very politely took his leave, ſaying, 'I ſuppoſe, gentlemen, you may have ſome private buſineſs together. I heartily wiſh a ſpeedy end to your confinement; and I congratulate you on the poſſeſſing ſo great, ſo noble, and ſo generous a friend.'

CHAP. VI.

Which inclines rather to Satire than Panegyric.

THE colonel had the curioſity to aſk Booth the name of the gentleman who, in the vulgar language, had ſtruck or taken him in for a guinea, with ſo much eaſe and dexterity. Booth anſwered, he did not know his name; all that he knew of him was, that he was the moſt impudent and illiterate fellow he had ever ſeen; and that, by his own account, he was the author of moſt of the wonderful productions of the age. 'Perhaps,' ſaid he, 'it may look uncharitable in me to blame you for your generoſity; but I am convinced the fellow hath not the leaſt merit or capacity; and you have ſubſcribed to the moſt horrid traſh that ever was publiſhed!'

'I care not a farthing what he publiſhes,' cries the colonel. 'Heaven forbid I ſhould be obliged to read half the nonſenſe I have ſubſcribed to!'

'But, don't you think,' ſaid Booth, 'that by ſuch indiſcriminate encouragement of authors you do a real miſchief to ſociety? By propagating the ſubſcriptions of ſuch fellows, people are tired out, and with-hold their contributions to men of real merit; and, at the ſame time, you are contributing to fill the world, not only with nonſenſe, but with all the ſcurrility, indecency, and profaneneſs, with which

'the

'the age abounds; and with which all bad writers 'supply the defect of genius.'

'Pugh!' cries the colonel, 'I never consider these 'matters. Good or bad, it is all one to me; but 'there's an acquaintance of mine, and a man of great 'wit too, that thinks the worst the best, as they are 'the surest to make him laugh.'

'I ask your pardon, Sir,' says the sejeant; 'but I 'wish your honour would consider your own affairs a 'little; for it grows late in the evening.'

'The serjeant says true,' answered the colonel. 'What is it you intend to do?'

'Faith, colonel, I know not what I shall do. My 'affairs seem so irreparable, that I have been driving 'them, as much as possibly I could, from my mind. 'If I was to suffer alone, I think I could bear them 'with some philosophy; but when I consider who are 'to be the sharers in my fortune---the dearest of chil-'dren, and the best, the worthiest, and the noblest of 'women---pardon me, my dear friend! these sensations 'are above me; they convert me into a woman; they 'drive me to despair, to madness.'

The colonel advised him to command himself; and told him, this was not the way to retrieve his fortune. 'As to me, my dear Booth,' said he, 'you know you 'may command me as far as is really within my 'power.'

Booth answered eagerly, that he was so far from expecting any more favours from the colonel, that he had resolved not to let him know any thing of his misfortune. 'No, my dear friend,' cries he, 'I am too 'much obliged to you already;' and then burst into many fervent expressions of gratitude; till the colonel himself stopped him, and begged him to give an account of the debt or debts for which he was detained in that horrid place.

Booth answered, he could not be very exact; but he feared it was upwards of four hundred pounds.

'It is but three hundred pounds, indeed, Sir,' cries the

ſerjeant; 'if you can raiſe three hundred pounds, you 'are a free man this moment.'

Booth, who did not apprehend the generous meaning of the ſerjeant, as well as, I believe, the reader will, anſwered, he was miſtaken; that he had computed his debts, and they amounted to upwards of four hundred pounds; nay, that the bailiff had ſhewn him writs for above that ſum.

'Whether your debts are three or four hundred,' cries the colonel, 'the preſent buſineſs is to give bail 'only; and then you will have ſome time to try your 'friends. I think you might get a company abroad, 'and then I would advance the money on the ſecurity of 'half your pay; and, in the mean time, I will be one 'of your bail with all my heart.'

While Booth poured forth his gratitude for all this kindneſs, the ſerjeant ran down ſtairs for the bailiff, aad ſhortly after returned with him into the room.

The bailiff being informed that the colonel offered to be bail for his priſoner, anſwered a little ſurlily, 'Well, Sir, and who will be the other? You know, 'I ſuppoſe, there muſt be two; and I muſt have time 'to enquire after them.'

The colonel replied, 'I believe, Sir, I am well 'known to be reſponſible for a much larger ſum than 'your demand on this gentleman; but if your forms 'require two, I ſuppoſe the ſerjeant here will do for 'the other.'

'I don't know the ſerjeant, nor you either, Sir,' cries Bondum; 'and if you propoſe yourſelves bail 'for the gentleman, I muſt have time to enquire after 'you.'

'You need very little time to enquire after me,' ſays the colonel, 'for I can ſend for ſeveral of the law, 'whom I ſuppoſe you know, to ſatisfy you; but con-'ſider, it is very late.'

'Yes, Sir,' anſwered Bondum; 'I do conſider it 'is too late for the captain to be bailed to-night.'

'What do mean by too late?' cries the colonel.

'I mean,

'I mean, Sir, that I must search the office, and that 'is now shut up; for if my lord mayor and the court 'of aldermen would be bound for him, I would not 'discharge him till I had searched the office.'

'How, Sir,' cries the colonel; 'hath the law of 'England no more regard for the liberty of the subject, 'than to suffer such fellows as you to detain a man 'in custody for debt, when he can give undeniable se-'curity?'

'Don't fellow me,' said the bailiff; 'I am as good 'a fellow as yourself, I believe, though you have that 'ribband in your hat there.'

'Do you know who you are speaking to?' said the serjeant. 'Do you know you are talking to a colo-'nel of the army?'

'What's a colonel of the army to me?' cries the bailiff. 'I have had as good as he in my custody be-'fore now.'

'And a member of parliament,' cries the serjeant.

'Is the gentleman a member of parliament? Well, 'and what harm have I said? I am sure I meant no 'harm; and if his honour is offended, I ask his par-'don: to be sure, his honour must know that the she-'riff is answerable for all the writs in the office, though 'they were never so many, and I am answerable to the 'sheriff. I am sure the captain can't say that I have 'shewn him any manner of incivility since he hath been 'here.---And I hope, honourable Sir,' cries he, turning to the colonel, 'you don't take any thing amiss 'that I said, or meant by way of disrespect, or any 'such matter. I did not, indeed, as the gentleman 'here says, know who I was speaking to; but I did 'not say any thing uncivil, as I know of, and I hope 'no offence.'

The colonel was more easily pacified than might have been expected; and told the bailiff, that if it was against the rules of law to discharge Mr. Booth that evening, he must be contented. He then addressed himself to his friend, and began to prescribe comfort

and

and patience to him, saying, he must rest satisfied with his confinement that night, and the next morning he promised to visit him again.

Booth answered, that as for himself, the lying one night in any place was very little worth his regard. 'You and I, my dear friend, have both spent our 'evening in a worse situation than I shall in this house. 'All my concern is for my poor Amelia, whose suf-'ferings on account of my absence I know, and I feel 'with unspeakable tenderness. Could I be assured she 'was tolerably easy, I could be contented in chains, or 'in a dungeon.'

'Give yourself no concern on her account,' said the colonel. 'I will wait on her myself, though I break 'an engagement for that purpose, and will give her 'such assurances as I am convinced will make her per-'fectly easy.'

Booth embraced his friend, and weeping over him, paid his acknowledgments with tears for all his good-ness. In words, indeed, he was not able to thank him; for gratitude, joined with his other passions, al-most choaked him, and stopped his utterance.

After a short scene, in which nothing passed worth recounting, the colonel bid his friend good-night; and leaving the serjeant with him, made the best of his way back to Amelia.

CHAP. VII.

Worthy a very serious Perusal.

THE colonel found Amelia sitting very disconsolate with Mrs. Atkinson. He entered the room with an air of great gaiety, assured Amelia that her husband was perfectly well, and that he hoped the next day he would again be with her.

Amelia was a little comforted at this account; and vented many grateful expressions to the colonel for his unparalleled friendship, as she was pleased to call it. She could not, however, help giving way soon after to a sigh at the thoughts of her husband's bondage, and de-

clared

clared that night would be the longeſt ſhe had ever known.

'This lady, Madam,' cries the colonel, 'muſt endeavour to make it ſhorter; and if you will give me 'leave, I will join in the ſame endeavour.' Then, after ſome more conſolatory ſpeeches, the colonel attempted to give a gay turn to the diſcourſe; and ſaid, 'I was engaged to have ſpent this evening diſagreeably at Ranelagh, with a ſet of company I did not 'like. How vaſtly am I obliged to you, dear Mrs. 'Booth, that I paſs it ſo infinitely more to my ſatisfaction.'

'Indeed, colonel,' ſaid Amelia, 'I am convinced 'that to a mind ſo rightly turned as yours, there muſt 'be a much ſweeter reliſh in the higheſt offices of 'friendſhip, than in any pleaſures which the gayeſt 'public places can afford.'

'Upon my word, Madam,' ſaid the colonel, 'you 'now do me no more than juſtice. I have, and always 'had, the utmoſt indifference for ſuch pleaſures. In'deed, I hardly allow them worthy of that name, or, 'if they are ſo at all, it is in a very low degree. In 'my opinion, the higheſt friendſhip muſt always lead 'us to the higheſt pleaſure.'

Here Amelia entered into a long diſſertation on friendſhip, in which ſhe pointed ſeveral times directly at the colonel as the hero of her tale.

The colonel highly applauded all her ſentiments; and when he could not avoid taking the compliment to himſelf, he received it with a moſt reſpectful bow. He then tried his hand likewiſe at deſcription, in which he found means to repay all Amelia's panegyric in kind. This, though he did with all poſſible delicacy, yet a curious obſerver might have been apt to ſuſpect that it was chiefly on her account that the colonel had avoided the maſquerade.

In diſcourſes of this kind they paſſed the evening, till it was very late, the colonel never offering to ſtir from his chair before the clock had ſtruck one; when he

he thought, perhaps, that decency obliged him to take his leave.

As ſoon as he was gone, Mrs. Atkinſon ſaid to Mrs. Booth, 'I think, Madam, you told me this afternoon, that the colonel was married.'

Amelia anſwered, ſhe did ſo.

'I think, likewiſe, Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Atkinſon, 'you was acquainted with the colonel's lady.'

Amelia anſwered, that ſhe had been extremely intimate with her abroad.

'Is ſhe young, and handſome?' ſaid Mrs. Atkinſon. 'In ſhort, pray, was it a match of love or convenience?'

Amelia anſwered, entirely of love, ſhe believed, on his ſide: for that the lady had little or no fortune.

'I am very glad to hear it,' ſaid Mrs. Atkinſon: 'for I am ſure the colonel is in love with ſomebody. 'I think, I never ſaw a more luſcious picture of love 'drawn than that which he was pleaſed to give us as 'the portraiture of friendſhip. I have read, indeed, 'of Pylades and Oreſtes, Damon and Pythias, and 'other great friends of old; nay, I ſometimes flatter 'myſelf that I am capable of being a friend myſelf; 'but as for that fine, ſoft, tender, delicate paſſion, 'which he was pleaſed to deſcribe, I am convinced 'there muſt go a he and a ſhe to the compoſition.

'Upon my word, my dear, you are miſtaken,' cries Amelia. 'If you had known the friendſhip which 'hath always ſubſiſted between the colonel and my 'huſband, you would not imagine it poſſible for any 'deſcription to exceed it. Nay, I think his behaviour this very day is ſufficient to convince you.'

'I own what he hath done to-day hath great merit,' ſaid Mrs. Atkinſon; 'and yet from what he hath ſaid 'to-night---you will pardon me, dear Madam; perhaps I am too quick-ſighted in my obſervations, nay, 'I am afraid I am even impertinent.'

'Fie upon it,' cries Amelia; 'how can you talk in 'that ſtrain! Do you imagine I expect ceremony?

'Pray

'Pray ſpeak what you think with the utmoſt free-
'dom.'

'Did he not then,' ſaid Mrs. Atkinſon, 'repeat
'the words, *the fineſt woman in the world*, more than
'once? Did he not make uſe of an expreſſion which
'might have become the mouth of Oroondates him-
'ſelf? If I remember, the words were theſe: that had
'he been Alexander the Great, he ſhould have thought
'it more glory to have wiped off a tear from the bright
'eyes of Statira, than to have conquered fifty worlds.'

'Did he ſay ſo?' cries Amelia. 'I think he did
'ſay ſomething like it; but my thoughts were ſo full
'of my huſband that I took little notice. But what
'would you infer from what he ſaid? I hope you don't
'think he is in love with me!'

'I hope he doth not think ſo himſelf,' anſwered Mrs. Atkinſon; 'though when he mentioned the bright
'eyes of Statira, he fixed his own eyes on yours with
'the moſt languiſhing air I ever beheld.'

Amelia was going to anſwer, when the ſerjeant arrived, and then ſhe immediately fell to enquiring after her huſband; and received ſuch ſatisfactory anſwers to all her many queſtions concerning him, that ſhe expreſſed great pleaſure. Theſe ideas ſo poſſeſſed her mind, that without once caſting her thoughts on any other matters, ſhe took her leave of the ſerjeant and his lady, and repaired to bed to her children, in a room which Mrs. Atkinſon had provided her in the ſame houſe; where we will at preſent wiſh her a good night.

CHAP. VIII.

Conſiſting of grave Matters.

WHILE innocence and cheerful hope, in ſpite of the malice of fortune, cloſed the eyes of the gentle Amelia on her homely bed, and ſhe enjoyed a ſweet and profound ſleep; the colonel lay reſtleſs all night on his down: his mind was affected with a kind of ague fit; ſometimes ſcorched up with flaming deſires, and again chilled with the coldeſt deſpair.

There is a time, I think, according to one of our

poets, *when luſt and envy ſleep*. This, I ſuppoſe is, when they are well gorged with the food they moſt delight in; but while either of theſe hunger,

Nor poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowſy ſyrups of the Eaſt,
Will ever medicine them to ſlumber.

The colonel was, at preſent, unhappily tormented by both theſe fiends. His laſt evening's converſation with Amelia had done his buſineſs effectually. The many kind words ſhe had ſpoken to him, the many kind looks ſhe had given him, as being, ſhe conceived, the friend and preſerver of her huſband, had made an entire conqueſt of his heart. Thus, the very love which ſhe bore him, as the perſon to whom her little family were to owe their preſervation and happineſs, inſpired him with thoughts of ſinking them all in the loweſt abyſs of ruin and miſery; and while ſhe ſmiled with all her ſweetneſs on the ſuppoſed friend of her huſband, ſhe was converting that friend into his moſt bitter enemy.

Friendſhip, take heed; if woman interfere,
Be ſure the hour of thy deſtruction's near.

Theſe are the lines of Vanbrugh; and the ſentiment is better than the poetry. To ſay the truth, as a handſome wife is the cauſe and cement of many falſe friendſhips, ſhe is often too liable to deſtroy the real ones.

Thus the object of the colonel's luſt very plainly appears; but the object of his envy may be more difficult to diſcover. Nature and fortune had ſeemed to ſtrive with a kind of rivalſhip, which ſhould beſtow moſt on the colonel. The former had given him him perſon, parts, and conſtitution, in all which he was ſuperior to almoſt every other man. The latter had given him rank in life, and riches, both in a very eminent degree. Whom then ſhould this happy man envy? Here, leſt ambition ſhould miſlead the reader to ſearch the palaces of the great, we will direct him at once to Gray's Inn Lane; where, in a miſerable bed, in a miſerable room, he will ſee a miſerable broken lieutenant, in a miſerable condition,

condition, with ſeveral heavy debts on his back, and without a penny in his pocket. This, and no other, was the object of the colonel's envy. And why? becauſe this wretch was poſſeſſed of the affections of a poor little lamb; which all the vaſt flocks that were within the power and reach of the colonel, could not prevent that glutton's longing for. And ſure this image of the lamb is not improperly adduced on this occaſion; for what was the colonel's deſire, but to lead this poor lamb, as it were, to the ſlaughter, in order to purchaſe a feaſt of a few days by her final deſtruction, and to tear her away from the arms of one where ſhe was ſure of being fondled and careſſed all the days of her life.

While the colonel was agitated with theſe thoughts, his greateſt comfort was, that Amelia and Booth were now ſeparated, and his greateſt terror was of their coming again together. From wiſhes, therefore, he began to meditate deſigns; and ſo far was he from any intention of procuring the liberty of his friend, that he began to form ſchemes of prolonging his confinement, till he could procure ſome means of ſending him away far from her; in which caſe he doubted not of ſucceeding in all he deſired.

He was forming this plan in his mind, when a ſervant informed him, that one Serjeant Atkinſon deſired to ſpeak with his honour. The ſerjeant was immediately admitted, and acquainted the colonel, that if he pleaſed to go and become bail for Mr. Booth, another unexceptionable houſekeeper would be there to join with him. This perſon the ſerjeant had procured that morning, and had, by leave of his wife, given him a bond of indemnification for the purpoſe.

The colonel did not ſeem ſo elated with this news as Atkinſon expected. On the contrary, inſtead of making a direct anſwer to what Atkinſon ſaid, the colonel began thus: 'I think, ſerjeant, Mr. Booth 'hath told me that you was foſter-brother to his lady. 'She is really a charming woman, and it is a thouſand 'pities ſhe ſhould ever have been placed in the dreadful

'situation she is now in. There is nothing so silly as 'for subaltern officers of the army to marry, unless 'where they meet with women of very great fortunes 'indeed. What can be the event of their marrying 'otherwise, but entailing misery and beggary on their 'wives and their posterity?'

'Ah, Sir!' cries the serjeant, 'it is too late to think 'of those matters now. To be sure, my lady might 'have married one of the top gentlemen in the country; 'for she is certainly one of the best, as well as one of 'the handsomest women in the kingdom; and if she 'had been fairly dealt by, would have had a very great 'fortune into the bargain. Indeed, she is worthy of 'the greatest prince in the world; and if I had been 'the greatest prince in the world, I should have thought 'myself happy with such a wife; but she was pleased 'to like the lieutenant, and certainly there can be no 'happiness in marriage without liking.'

'Look'e, serjeant,' said the colonel, 'you know 'very well that I am the lieutenant's friend. I think 'I have shewn myself so.'

'Indeed your honour hath,' quoth the serjeant, 'more than once, to my knowledge.'

'But I am angry with him for his imprudence, 'greatly angry with him for his imprudence; and the 'more so, as it affects a lady of so much worth.'

'She is, indeed, a lady of the highest worth,' cries the serjeant. 'Poor dear lady! I knew her an't 'please your honour, from her infancy; and the sweetest-'tempered, best natured lady she is, that ever trod on 'English ground. I have always loved her as if she 'was my own sister. Nay, she hath very often called 'me brother; and I have taken it to be a greater ho-'nour than if I was to be called a general officer.'

'What pity it is,' said the colonel, 'that this worthy 'creature should be exposed to so much misery by the 'thoughtless behaviour of a man, who, though I am 'his friend, I cannot help saying, hath been guilty of 'imprudence, at least. Why could he not live upon

'his

'his half-pay? What had he to do to run himself 'into debt in this outrageous manner?'

'I wish, indeed,' cries the serjeant, 'he had been a 'little more considerative; but I hope this will be a 'warning to him.'

'How am I sure of that?' answered the colonel; 'or what reason is there to expect it? Extravagance 'is a vice of which men are not so easily cured. I have 'thought a great deal of this matter, Mr. Serjeant; 'and upon the most mature deliberation, I am of opi-'nion, that it will be better both for him and his poor 'lady, that he should smart a little more.'

'Your honour, Sir, to be sure, is in the right,' replied the serjeant; 'but yet, Sir, if you will pardon 'me for speaking, I hope you will be pleased to consi-'der my poor lady's case. She suffers, all this while, 'as much or more than the lieutenant; for I know her 'so well, that I am certain she will never have a mo-'ment's ease till her husband is out of confinement.'

'I know women better than you, serjeant,' cries the colonel: 'they sometimes place their affections on a 'husband, as children do on their nurse; but they are 'both to be weaned. I know you, serjeant, to be a 'fellow of sense as well as spirit, or I should not speak 'so freely to you; but I took a fancy to you a long 'time ago, and I intend to serve you; but, first, I ask 'you this question, is your attachment to Mr. Booth, 'or to his lady?'

'Certainly, Sir,' said the serjeant, I must love my 'lady best. Not but I have a great affection for the 'lieutenant too, because I know my lady hath the 'same; and, indeed, he hath been always very good 'to me, as far as was in his power. A lieutenant, 'your honour knows, can't do a great deal; but I have 'always found him my friend upon all occasions.'

'You say true,' cries the colonel; 'a lieutenant can 'do but little; but I can do much to serve you, and 'will too. But let me ask you one question, who was

'the lady whom I saw last night with Mrs. Booth at 'her lodgings?'

Here the serjeant blushed, and repeated, 'The lady, 'Sir!'

'Aye, a lady; a woman,' cries the colonel, 'who 'supped with us last night. She looked rather too 'much like a gentlewoman for the mistress of a lodging 'house.'

The serjeant's cheeks glowed at this compliment to his wife, and he was just going to own her, when the colonel proceeded: 'I think I never saw in my life so ill-looking, sly, demure a b----. I would give something, methinks, to know who she was.'

'I don't know, indeed,' cries the serjeant, in great confusion: 'I know nothing about her.'

'I wish you would enquire,' said the colonel, 'and 'let me know her name, and likewise what she is. I 'have a strange curiosity to know; and let me see you 'again this evening exactly at seven.'

'And will not your honour, then, go to the lieu-'tenant this morning?' said Atkinson.

'It is not in my power,' answered the colonel; 'I 'am engaged another way. Besides, there is no haste 'in this affair. If men will be imprudent, they must 'suffer the consequences. Come to me at seven, and 'bring me all the particulars you can concerning that 'ill-looked jade I mentioned to you, for I am resolved 'to know who she is. And so, good-morrow to you, 'serjeant; be assured I will take an opportunity to do 'something for you.'

Though some readers may, perhaps, think the serjeant not unworthy of the freedom with which the colonel treated him, yet that haughty officer would have been very backward to have condescended to such familiarity with one of his rank, had he not proposed some design from it. In truth, he began to conceive hopes of making the serjeant instrumental to his design on Amelia; in other words, to convert him into a pimp; an office in which the colonel had been served by Atkinson's

ſon's betters; and which, as he knew it was in his power very well to reward him, he had no apprehenſion that the ſerjeant would decline: an opinion which the ſerjeant might have pardoned, though he had never given the leaſt grounds for it, ſince the colonel borrowed it from the knowledge of his own heart. This dictated to him, that he, from a bad motive, was capable of deſiring to debauch his friend's wife; and the ſame heart inſpired him to hope that another, from another bad motive, might be guilty of the ſame breach of friendſhip, in aſſiſting him. Few men, I believe, think better of others than of themſelves; nor do they eaſily allow the exiſtence of any virtue, of which they perceive no traces in their own minds; for which reaſon I have obſerved, that it is extremely difficult to perſuade a rogue that you are an honeſt man; nor would you ever ſucceed in the attempt by the ſtrongeſt evidence, was it not for the comfortable concluſion which the rogue draws, that he who proves himſelf to be honeſt, proves himſelf to be a fool at the ſame time.

CHAP. IX.

A curious Chapter, from which a curious Reader may draw ſundry Obſervations.

THE ſerjeant retired from the colonel in a very dejected ſtate of mind: in which, however, we muſt leave him a while, and return to Amelia; who, as ſoon as ſhe was up, had diſpatched Mrs. Atkinſon to pay off her former lodgings, and to bring off all her cloaths and other moveables.

The truſty meſſenger returned without performing her errand; for Mrs. Elliſon had locked up all her rooms, and was gone out very early that morning, and the ſervant knew not whither ſhe was gone.

The two ladies now ſat down to breakfaſt, together with Amelia's two children; after which, Amelia declared ſhe would take a coach and viſit her huſband. To this motion Mrs. Atkinſon ſoon agreed, and offered to be her companion. To ſay truth, I think it was reaſonable enough; and the great abhorrence which

Booth

Booth had of ſeeing his wife in a bailiff's houſe, was, perhaps, rather too nice and delicate.

When the ladies were both dreſſed, and juſt going to ſend for their vehicle, a great knocking was heard at the door, and preſently Mrs. James was uſhered into the room.

This viſit was diſagreeable enough to Amelia, as it detained her from the ſight of her huſband, for which ſhe ſo eagerly longed. However, as ſhe had no doubt but that the viſit would be reaſonably ſhort, ſhe reſolved to receive the lady with all the complaiſance in her power.

Mrs. James now behaved herſelf ſo very unlike the perſon that ſhe lately appeared, that it might have ſurprized any one who doth not know, that beſides that of a fine lady which is all mere art and mummery, every ſuch woman hath ſome real character at the bottom, in which, whenever nature gets the better of her, ſhe acts. Thus the fineſt ladies in the world will ſometimes love, and ſometimes ſcratch, according to their different natural diſpoſitions, with great fury and violence, though both of theſe are equally inconſiſtent with a fine lady's artificial character.

Mrs. James, then, was at the bottom a very good-natured woman; and the moment ſhe heard of Amelia's misfortune, was ſincerely grieved at it. She had acquieſced, on the very firſt motion, with the colonel's deſign of inviting her to her houſe; and this morning at breakfaſt, when he had acquainted her that Amelia made ſome difficulty in accepting the offer, very readily undertook to go herſelf, and perſuade her friend to accept the invitation.

She now preſſed this matter with ſuch earneſtneſs, that Amelia, who was not extremely verſed in the art of denying, was hardly able to refuſe her importunity; nothing, indeed, but her affection to Mrs. Atkinſon, could have prevailed on her to refuſe: that point, however, ſhe would not give up; and Mrs. James, at laſt, was contented with a promiſe, that as ſoon as their affairs

fairs were ſettled, Amelia, with her huſband and family, would make her a viſit, and ſtay ſome time with her in the country, whither ſhe was ſoon to retire.

Having obtained this promiſe, Mrs. James, after many very friendly promiſes, took her leave; and ſtepping into her coach, re-aſſumed the fine lady, and drove away to join her company at an auction.

The moment ſhe was gone, Mrs. Atkinſon, who had left the room upon the approach of Mrs. James, returned into it, and was informed by Amelia of all that had paſt.

'Pray, Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Atkinſon, 'do this 'colonel and his lady live, as it is called, well to-'gether?'

'If you mean to aſk,' cries Amelia, 'whether they 'are a very fond couple, I muſt anſwer that I believe 'they are not.'

'I have been told,' ſays Mrs. Atkinſon, 'that there 'have been inſtances of women who have become bawds 'to their own huſbands, and the huſbands pimps for 'them.'

'Fie upon it,' cries Amelia; 'I hope there are no 'ſuch people. Indeed, my dear, this is being a little 'too cenſorious.'

'Call it what you pleaſe,' anſwered Mrs. Atkinſon; 'it ariſes from my love to you, and my fears for 'your danger. You know the proverb of a burnt 'child; and if ſuch a one hath any good-nature, it 'will dread the fire on the account of others, as well as 'on it's own. And if I may ſpeak my ſentiments 'freely, I cannot think you will be in ſafety at this 'colonel's houſe.'

'I cannot but believe your apprehenſions to be ſin-'cere,' replied Amelia, 'and I muſt think myſelf obli-'ged to you for them; but I am convinced you are 'entirely in an error. I look on Colonel James as the 'moſt generous and beſt of men. He was a friend, 'and an excellent friend too, to my huſband, long be-'fore I was acquainted with him, and he hath done

'him

'him a thouſand good offices. What do you ſay of his 'behaviour yeſterday?'

'I wiſh,' cries Mrs. Atkinſon, 'that his behaviour 'to-day had been equal. What I am now going to 'undertake, is the moſt diſagreeable office of friendſhip, 'but it is a neceſſary one. I muſt tell you, therefore, 'what paſſed this morning between the colonel and Mr. 'Atkinſon; for though it will hurt you, you ought, 'on many accounts, to know it.' Here ſhe related the whole which we have recorded in the preceding chapter, and with which the ſerjeant had acquainted her while Mrs. James was paying her viſit to Amelia; and as the ſerjeant had painted the matter rather in ſtronger colours than the colonel, ſo Mrs. Atkinſon again a little improved on the ſerjeant. Neither of theſe good people, perhaps, intended to aggravate any circumſtance; but ſuch is, I believe, the unavoidable conſequence of all reports. Mrs. Atkinſon, indeed, may be ſuppoſed not to ſee what related to James, in the moſt favourable light, as the ſerjeant, with more honeſty than prudence, had ſuggeſted to his wife, that the colonel had not the kindeſt opinion of her, and had called her a ſly and demure-----'It is true, he omitted ill-looking b-----; two words, which are, perhaps, ſuperior to the patience of any Job in petticoats that ever lived. He made amends, however, by ſubſtituting ſome other phraſes in their ſtead, not extremely agreeable to a female ear.

It appeared to Amelia, from Mrs. Atkinſon's relation, that the colonel had groſſly abuſed Booth to the ſerjeant, and had abſolutely refuſed to become his bail. Poor Amelia became a pale and motionleſs ſtatue at this account. At length ſhe cried, 'if this be true, I and 'mine are all, indeed, undone. We have no comfort, 'no hope, no friend left! I cannot diſbelieve you. I 'know you would not deceive me. Why ſhould you, 'indeed, deceive me? But what can have cauſed this 'alteration ſince laſt night? Did I ſay or do any thing 'to offend him?'

'You

'You ſaid and did, rather, I believe, a great deal 'too much to pleaſe him, anſwered Mrs. Atkinſon. 'Beſides, he is not in the leaſt offended with you; on 'the contrary, he ſaid many kind things.'

'What can my poor love have done?' ſaid Amelia. 'He hath not ſeen the colonel ſince laſt night? Some 'villain hath ſet him againſt my huſband; he was once 'before ſuſpicious of ſuch a perſon. Some cruel mon-'ſter hath belyed his innocence.'

'Pardon me, dear Madam,' ſaid Mrs. Atkinſon, I believe the perſon who hath injured the captain with 'this friend of his, is one of the worthieſt and beſt of 'creatures. Nay, do not be ſurprized, the perſon I 'mean is even your fair ſelf: ſure you would not be ſo 'dull in any other caſe; but in this, gratitude, humi-'lity, modeſty, every virtue, ſhut your eyes.

'*Mortales habetant viſus*,

'as Virgil ſays. What in the world can be more con-'ſiſtent, than his deſire to have you at his own houſe, 'and to keep your huſband confined in another? All 'that he ſaid, and all that he did yeſterday; and, what 'is more convincing to me than both, all that he looked 'laſt night, are very conſiſtent with both theſe de-'ſigns.'

'O heavens!' cries Amelia, 'you chill my blood 'with horror! the idea freezes me to death: I cannot, 'muſt not, will not think of it. Nothing but convic-'tion---Heaven forbid I ſhould ever have more con-'viction! And did he abuſe my huſband! What, did 'he abuſe a poor, unhappy, diſtreſſed creature; op-'preſſed, ruined, torn from his children, torn away 'from his wretched wife; the honeſteſt, worthieſt, 'nobleſt, tendereſt, fondeſt, beſt---' Here ſhe burſt into an agony of grief which exceeds the power of deſcription.

In this ſituation Mrs. Atkinſon was doing her utmoſt to ſupport her, when a moſt violent knocking was heard at the door; and immediately the ſerjeant ran haſtily

haſtily into the room, bringing with him a cordial which preſently relieved Amelia. What this cordial was, we ſhall inform the reader in due time. In the mean while he muſt ſuſpend his curioſity; and the gentlemen at White's may lay wagers, whether it was Ward's pill, or Dr. James's powder.

But before we cloſe this chapter, and return back to the bailiff's houſe, we muſt do our beſt to reſcue the character of our heroine from the dulneſs of apprehenſion which ſeveral of our quick-ſighted readers may lay more heavily to her charge than was done by her friend Mrs. Atkinſon.

I muſt inform, therefore, all ſuch readers, that it is not becauſe innocence is more blind than guilt, that the former often overlooks and tumbles into the pit, which the latter foreſees and avoids. The truth is, that it is almoſt impoſſible guilt ſhould miſs the diſcovering of all the ſnares in it's way; as it is conſtantly prying cloſely into every corner, in order to lay ſnares for others. Whereas innocence, having no ſuch purpoſe, walks fearleſsly and careleſsly through life, and is conſequently liable to tread on the gins which cunning has laid to entrap it. To ſpeak plainly, and without allegory or figure, it is not want of ſenſe, but want of ſuſpicion, by which innocence is often betrayed. Again, we often admire at the folly of the dupe, when we ſhould transfer our whole ſurprize to the aſtoniſhing guilt of the betrayer. In a word, many an innocent perſon hath owed his ruin to this circumſtance alone, that the degree of villainy was ſuch as muſt have exceeded the faith of every man who was not himſelf a villain.

CHAP. X.

In which are many profound Secrets of Philoſophy.

BOOTH having had enough of the author's company the preceding day, choſe now another companion. Indeed, the author was not very ſolicitous of a ſecond interview; for as he could have no hope from Booth's pocket, ſo he was not likely to receive much increaſe to his vanity from Booth's converſation: for, low as this wretch

wretch was in virtue, ſenſe, learning, birth, and fortune, he was by no means low in his vanity. This paſſion, indeed, was ſo high in him, and at the ſame time ſo blinded him to his own demerits, that he hated every man who did not either flatter him, or give him money. In ſhort, he claimed a ſtrange kind of right; either to cheat all his acquaintance of their praiſe, or to pick their pockets of their pence; in which latter caſe he himſelf repaid very liberally with panegyric.

A very little ſpecimen of ſuch a fellow muſt have ſatisfied a man of Mr. Booth's temper. He choſe, therefore, now to aſſociate himſelf with that gentleman of whom Bondum had given ſo ſhabby a character. In ſhort, Mr. Booth's opinion of the bailiff was ſuch, that he recommended a man moſt, where he leaſt intended it. Nay, the bailiff, in the preſent inſtance, though he had drawn a malicious concluſion, honeſtly avowed, that this was drawn only from the poverty of the perſon, which is never, I believe, any forcible diſrecommendation to a good mind; but he muſt have had a very bad mind, indeed, who, in Mr. Booth's circumſtances, could have diſliked or deſpiſed another man becauſe that other man was poor.

Some previous converſation having paſt between the gentleman and Booth, in which they had both opened their ſeveral ſituations to each other; the former caſting an affectionate look on the latter, expreſſed great compaſſion for his circumſtances; for which Booth thanking him, ſaid, 'You muſt have a great deal of 'compaſſion, and be a very good man, in ſuch a ter'rible ſituation as you deſcribe yourſelf, to have any 'pity to ſpare for other people.'

'My affairs, Sir,' anſwered the gentleman, 'are 'very bad, it is true; and yet there is one circumſtance 'which makes you appear to me more the object of 'pity than I am to myſelf; and it is this: that you 'muſt from your years be a novice in affliction; whereas 'I have ſerved a long apprenticeſhip to miſery, and 'ought, by this time, to be a pretty good maſter of

'my trade. To ſay the truth, I believe, habit teaches 'men to bear the burdens of the mind, as it inures 'them to bear heavy burdens on their ſhoulders. 'Without uſe and experience, the ſtrongeſt minds and 'bodies both will ſtagger under a weight which habit 'might render eaſy, and even contemptible.'

'There is great juſtice,' cries Booth, 'in the com-'pariſon; and, I think, I have myſelf experienced the 'truth of it; for I am not that Tyro in affliction, 'which you ſeem to apprehend me. And, perhaps, 'it is from the very habit you mention, that I am able 'to ſupport my preſent misfortunes a little like a 'man.'

The gentleman ſmiled at this, and cried, 'Indeed, 'captain, you are a young philoſopher.'

'I think,' cries Booth, 'I have ſome pretenſions 'to that philoſophy which is taught by misfortunes; 'and you ſeem to be of opinion, Sir, that is one of the 'beſt ſchools of philoſophy.'

'I mean no more, Sir,' ſaid the gentleman, 'than 'that in the days of our affliction we are inclined to think 'more ſeriouſly than in thoſe ſeaſons of life when we 'are engaged in the hurrying purſuits of buſineſs or 'pleaſure, when we have neither leiſure nor inclination 'to ſift and examine things to the bottom. Now 'there are two conſiderations, which from my having 'long fixed my thoughts upon them, have greatly ſup-'ported me under all my afflictions. The one is the 'brevity of life, even at it's longeſt duration, which 'the wiſeſt of men hath compared to the ſhort dimen-'ſion of a ſpan. One of the Roman poets compares it 'to the duration of a race; and another, to the much 'ſhorter tranſition of a wave.'

'The ſecond conſideration is, the uncertainty of it. 'Short as it's utmoſt limits are, it is far from being 'aſſured of reaching thoſe limits. The next day, the 'next hour, the next moment, may be the end of our 'courſe. Now, of what value is ſo uncertain, ſo pre-'carious a ſtation? This conſideration, indeed, how-

ever

'ever lightly it is paſſed over in our conception, doth
'in a great meaſure level all fortunes and conditions,
'and gives no man a right to triumph in the happieſt
'ſtate, or any reaſon to repine in the moſt miſerable.
'Would the moſt worldly men ſee this in the light in
'which they examine all other matters, they would
'ſoon feel and acknowledge the force of this way of
'reaſoning; for which of them would give any price
'for an eſtate, from which they were liable to be imme-
'diately ejected? or, would they not laugh at him as a
'madman, who accounted himſelf rich from ſuch an
'uncertain poſſeſſion? This is the fountain, Sir, from
'which I have drawn my philoſophy. Hence it is that
'I have learnt to look on all thoſe things which are eſ-
'teemed the bleſſings of life, and thoſe which are
'dreaded as it's evils, with ſuch a degree of indiffer-
'ence, that as I ſhould not be elated with poſſeſſing the
'former, ſo neither am I greatly dejected and depreſſed
'by ſuffering the latter. Is the actor eſteemed happier,
'to whoſe lot it falls to play the principal part, than
'he who plays the loweſt? and yet the drama may run
'twenty nights together, and by conſequence may out-
'laſt our lives: but, at the beſt, life is only a little
'longer drama; and the buſineſs of the great ſtage is
'conſequently a little more ſerious than that which is
'performed at the theatre-royal. But even here, the
'cataſtrophes and calamities which are repreſented are
'capable of affecting us. The wiſeſt men can deceive
'themſelves into feeling the diſtreſſes of a tragedy,
'though they know them to be merely imaginary;
'and the children will often lament them as realities:
'what wonder, then, if theſe tragical ſcenes, which I
'allow to be a little more ſerious, ſhould a little more
'affect us? Where then is the remedy, but in the
'philoſophy I have mentioned? which, when once by
'a long courſe of meditation it is reduced to a habit,
'teaches us to ſet a juſt value on every thing; and cures
'at once all eager wiſhes and abject fears, all violent

'joy and grief concerning objects which cannot endure 'long, and may not exiſt a moment.'

'You have expreſſed yourſelf extremely well,' cries Booth, 'and I entirely agree with the juſtice of your 'ſentiments; but, however true all this may be in 'theory, I ſtill doubt it's efficacy in practice. And 'the cauſe of the difference between theſe two is this; 'that we reaſon from our heads, but act from our 'hearts:

'*-----Video meliora, proboque:*
'*Deteriora ſequor.*

'Nothing can differ more widely than wiſe men and 'fools in their eſtimation of things; but as both act 'from their uppermoſt paſſion, they both often act 'alike. What comfort, then, can your philoſophy 'give to an avaricious man who is deprived of his 'riches; or to an ambitious man who is ſtripped of 'his power? to the fond lover who is torn from his 'miſtreſs; or to the tender huſband who is dragged 'from his wife? Do you really think, that any medi-'tations on the ſhortneſs of life will ſoothe them in 'their afflictions? Is not this very ſhortneſs itſelf one of 'their afflictions? And if the evil they ſuffer be a 'temporary deprivation of what they love, will they 'not think their fate the harder, and lament the more, 'that they are to loſe any part of an enjoyment to which 'there is ſo ſhort and ſo uncertain a period?'

'I beg leave, Sir,' ſaid the gentleman, 'to diſtin-'guiſh here. By philoſophy, I do not mean the bare 'knowledge of right and wrong; but an energy, a 'habit, as Ariſtotle calls it; and this I do firmly be-'lieve, with him and with the Stoicks, is ſuperior to 'all the attacks of fortune.'

He was proceeding, when the bailiff came in, and in a ſurly tone bade them both good-morrow; after which, he aſked the philoſopher, if he was prepared to go to Newgate; for that he muſt carry him thither that afternoon.

The poor man ſeemed very much ſhocked with this news.

news. 'I hope,' cries he, 'you will give a little longer 'time, if not till the return of the writ. But I beg 'you particularly, not to carry me thither to-day; for 'I expect my wife and children here in the evening.'

'I have nothing to do with wives and children,' cried the bailiff; 'I never desire to see any wives and 'children here. I like no such company.'

'I intreat you, said the prisoner, give me another 'day. I shall take it as a great obligation; and you 'will disappoint me in the cruellest manner in the 'world, if you refuse me.'

'I can't help people's disappointments,' cries the bailiff; 'I must consider myself and my own family. I 'know not where I shall be paid the money that's due 'already. I can't afford to keep prisoners at my own 'expence.'

'I don't intend it shall be at your expence,' cries the philosopher; 'my wife is gone to raise money this 'morning, and I hope to pay you all I owe you at 'her arrival. But we intend to sup together to-night 'at your house; and if you should remove me now, it 'would be the most barbarous disappointment to us 'both, and will make me the most miserable man alive.'

'Nay, for my part,' said the bailiff, 'I don't desire 'to do any thing barbarous. I know how to treat 'gentlemen with civility as well as another; and when 'people pay as they go, and spend their money like 'gentlemen, I am sure no body can accuse me of any 'incivility since I have been in the office. And if you 'intend to be merry to-night, I am not the man that 'will prevent it: though I say it, you may have as 'good a supper dressed here as at any tavern in town.'

'Since Mr. Bondum is so kind, Captain,' said the philosopher, 'I hope for the favour of your company. 'I assure you, if it ever be my fortune to go abroad 'into the world, I shall be proud of the honour of your 'acquaintance.'

'Indeed, Sir,' cries Booth, 'it is an honour I shall 'be very ready to accept; but as for this evening, I

'cannot help saying, I hope to be engaged in another 'place.'

'I promiſe you, Sir,' anſwered the other, 'I ſhall 'rejoice at your liberty, though I am a loſer by it.'

'Why, as to that matter,' cries Bondum with a 'ſneer, 'I fancy, captain, you may engage yourſelf to 'the gentleman without any fear of breaking your 'word; for I am very much miſtaken if we part to-'day.'

'Pardon me, my good friend,' ſaid Booth, 'but I 'expect my bail every minute.'

'Look'e, Sir,' cries Bondum, 'I don't love to ſee 'gentlemen in an error. I ſhall not take the ſerjeant's 'bail; and as for the colonel, I have been with him 'myſelf this morning (for to be ſure I love to do all I 'can for gentlemen;) and he told me, he could not 'poſſibly be here to day: beſides, why ſhould I mince 'the matter; there is more ſtuff in the office.'

'What do you mean by ſtuff?' cries Booth.

'I mean, that there is another writ,' anſwered the bailiff, 'at the ſuit of Mrs. Elliſon, the gentlewoman 'that was here yeſterday; and the attorney that was 'with her is concerned againſt you. Some officers 'would not tell you all this: but I loves to ſhew civi-'lity to gentlemen, while they behave themſelves as 'ſuch. And I loves the gentlemen of the army in par-'ticular. I had like to have been in the army myſelf 'once; but I liked the commiſſion I have better. 'Come, captain, let not your noble courage be caſt 'down; what ſay you to a glaſs of white wine, or a 'tiff of punch, by way of whet?'

'I have told you, Sir, I never drink in the morning,' cries Booth a little peeviſhly.

'No offence, I hope, Sir,' ſaid the bailiff. 'I hope 'I have not treated you with any incivility. I don't 'aſk any gentleman to call for liquor in my houſe, if 'he doth not chuſe it; nor I don't deſire any body to 'ſtay here longer than they have a mind to. Newgate, 'to be ſure, is the place for all debtors that can't find

'bail,

'bail. I knows what civility is, and I ſcorn to be-
'have myſelf unbecoming a gentleman; but I'd have
'you conſider that the twenty-four hours appointed by
'act of parliament are almoſt out; and ſo it is time to
'think of removing. As to bail, I would not have
'you flatter yourſelf; for I knows very well there are
'other things coming againſt you. Beſides, the ſum
'you are already charged with is very large, and I muſt
'ſee you in a place of ſafety. My houſe is no priſon,
'though I lock up for a little time in it. Indeed, when
'gentlemen are gentlemen, and likely to find bail, I
'don't ſtand for a day or two; but I have a good noſe
'at a bit of carrion, captain; I have not carried ſo
'much carrion to Newgate, without knowing the ſmell
'of it.'

'I underſtand not your cant,' cries Booth; 'but I
'did not think to have offended you ſo much by refuſing
'to drink in a morning.'

'Offend me, Sir!' cries the bailiff. 'Who told
'you ſo? Do you think, Sir, if I want a glaſs of wine,
'I am under any neceſſity of aſking my priſoner for it?
'Damn it, Sir, I'll ſhew you I ſcorn your words; I
'can afford to treat you with a glaſs of the beſt wine
'in England, if you come to that.' He then pulled out a handful of guineas, ſaying, 'There, Sir, they
'are all my own; I owe nobody a ſhilling. I am no
'beggar, nor no debtor. I am the king's officer, as
'well as you, and I will ſpend guinea for guinea as long
'as you pleaſe.'

'Hark'e, raſcal,' cries Booth, laying hold of the bailiff's collar, 'how dare you treat me with this in-
'ſolence? Doth the law give you any authority to in-
'ſult me in my misfortunes?' At which words he gave the bailiff a good ſhove, and threw him from him.

'Very well, Sir,' cries the bailiff, 'I will ſwear
'both an aſſault and an attempt to a reſcue. If officers
'are to be uſed in this manner, there is an end of all
'law and juſtice. But though I am not a match for

'you

'you myſelf, I have thoſe below that are.' He then ran to the door, and called up two ill-looking-fellows, his followers, whom, as ſoon as they entered the room, he ordered to ſeize on Booth, declaring he would immediately carry him to Newgate; at the ſame time pouring out a vaſt quantity of abuſe, below the dignity of hiſtory to record.

Booth deſired the two dirty fellows to ſtand off, and declared he would make no reſiſtance, at the ſame time bidding the bailiff carry him wherever he durſt.

'I'll ſhew you what I dare,' cries the bailiff; and again ordered the followers to lay hold of their priſoner, ſaying, 'He has aſſaulted me already, and endeavoured 'a reſcue. I ſhan't truſt ſuch a fellow to walk at 'liberty. A gentleman, indeed! Aye, aye, New-'gate is the propereſt place for ſuch gentry: as arrant 'carrion as ever was carried thither?'

The fellows then both laid violent hands on Booth, and the bailiff ſtepped to the door to order a coach; when on a ſudden the whole ſcene was changed in an inſtant: for now the ſerjeant came running, out of breath, into the room; and ſeeing his friend, the captain, roughly handled by two ill-looking fellows, without aſking any queſtions, ſtepped briſkly up to his aſſiſtance, and inſtantly gave one of the aſſailants ſo violent a ſalute with his fiſt, that he directly meaſured his length on the floor.

Booth having by this means his right arm at liberty, was unwilling to be idle, or entirely to owe his reſcue from both the ruffians to the ſerjeant; he therefore imitated the example which his friend had ſet him, and with a luſty blow levelled the other follower with his companion on the ground.

The bailiff roared out, 'A reſcue, a reſcue!' to which the ſerjeant anſwered, there was no reſcue intended. 'The captain,' ſaid he, 'wants no reſcue. 'Here are ſome friends coming who will deliver him in 'a better manner.'

The

The bailiff ſwore heartily he would carry him to Newgate, in ſpite of all the friends in the world.

'You carry him to Newgate!' cried the ſerjeant, with the higheſt indignation; 'offer but to lay your 'hands on him, and I will knock your teeth down 'your ugly jaws.' Then turning to Booth, he cried, 'They will be all here within a minute, Sir; we had 'much ado to keep my lady from coming herſelf; but 'ſhe is at home in good health, longing to ſee your 'honour; and I hope you will be with her within this 'half hour.'

And now three gentlemen entered the room; theſe were an attorney, the perſon whom the ſerjeant had procured in the morning to be his bail with Colonel James, and laſtly, Dr. Harriſon himſelf.

The bailiff no ſooner ſaw the attorney, with whom he was well acquainted, (for the others he knew not) than he began as the phraſe is, to pull in his horns, and ordered the two followers, who were now got again on their legs, to walk down ſtairs.

'So, captain!' ſays the doctor; 'when we laſt parted, 'I believe we neither of us expected to meet in ſuch a 'place as this.'

'Indeed, doctor,' cries Booth, 'I did not expect to 'have been ſent hither by the gentleman who did me 'that favour.'

'How ſo, Sir?' ſaid the doctor; 'you was ſent 'hither by ſome perſon, I ſuppoſe, to whom you was 'indebted. This is the uſual place, I apprehend, for 'creditors to ſend their debtors to. But you ought to 'be more ſurprized, that the gentleman who ſent you 'hither is come to releaſe you. Mr. Murphy, you 'will perform all the neceſſary ceremonials.'

The attorney then aſked the bailiff with how many actions Booth was charged, and was informed there were five beſides the doctor's, which was much the heavieſt of all. Proper bonds were preſently provided, and the doctor and the ſerjeant's friend ſigned them;

the

the bailiff, at the inſtance of the attorney, making no objection to the bail.

Booth, we may be aſſured, made a handſome ſpeech to the doctor for ſuch extraordinary friendſhip, with which, however, we do not think proper to trouble the reader: and now every thing being ended, and the company ready to depart, the bailiff ſtepped up to Booth, and told him he hoped he would remember civility money.

'I believe,' cries Booth, 'you mean, incivility money; if there be any fees due for rudeneſs, I muſt own 'you have a very juſt claim.'

'I am ſure, Sir,' cries the bailiff, 'I have treated 'your honour with all the reſpect in the world: no 'man, I am ſure, can charge me with uſing a gentleman rudely; I knows what belongs to a gentleman 'better: but you can't deny that two of my men have 'been knocked down; and I doubt not but, as you are 'a gentleman, you will give them ſomething to drink.'

Booth was about to anſwer with ſome paſſion, when the attorney interfered, and whiſpered in his ear, that it was uſual to make a compliment to the officer, and that he had better comply with the cuſtom.

'If the fellow had treated me civilly,' anſwered Booth, 'I ſhould have had no objection to comply with 'a bad cuſtom in his favour; but I am reſolved, I will 'never reward a man for uſing me ill, and I will not 'agree to give him a ſingle farthing.'

''Tis very well, Sir,' ſaid the bailiff; 'I am rightly 'ſerved for my good nature; but if it had been to do 'again, I would have taken care you ſhould not have 'been bailed this day.'

Dr. Harriſon, to whom Booth referred the cauſe, after giving him a ſuccinct account of what had paſſed, declared the captain to be in the right. He ſaid it was a moſt horrid impoſition, that ſuch fellows were ever ſuffered to prey on the neceſſitous: but that the example would be much worſe to reward them where they had behaved themſelves ill. 'And I think,' ſays he,

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'the bailiff is worthy of great rebuke for what he hath 'juſt now ſaid; in which, I hope, he hath boaſted of 'more power than is in him. We do indeed, with 'great juſtice and propriety, value ourſelves on our 'freedom, if the liberty of the ſubject depends on the 'pleaſure of ſuch fellows as theſe!'

'It is not ſo, neither, altogether,' cries the lawyer; 'but cuſtom hath eſtabliſhed a preſent or fee to them at 'the delivery of a priſoner, which they call civility 'money, and expect as in a manner their due, though 'in reality they have no right.'

'But will any man,' cries Dr. Harriſon, 'after 'what the captain hath told us, ſay that the bailiff 'hath behaved himſelf as he ought; and if he had, is 'he to be rewarded for acting in an unchriſtian and in-'human manner? It is pity, that inſtead of a cuſtom 'of feeing them out of the pockets of the poor 'and wretched, when they do not behave themſelves 'ill, there was not both a law and a practice to puniſh 'them ſeverely when they do. In the preſent caſe, I 'am ſo far from agreeing to give the bailiff a ſhilling, 'that, if there be any method of puniſhing him for his 'rudeneſs, I ſhall be heartily glad to ſee it put into ex-'ecution: for there are none whoſe conduct ſhould be 'ſo ſtrictly watched, as that of theſe neceſſary evils in 'the ſociety, as their office concerns, for the moſt part, 'tho' poor creatures who cannot do themſelves juſtice, 'and as they are generally the worſt of men who under-'take it.'

The bailiff then quitted the room, muttering that he ſhould know better what to do another time; and ſhortly after Booth and his friends left the houſe; but as they were going out, the author took Dr. Harriſon aſide, and ſlipped a receipt into his hand, which the doctor returned, ſaying, he never ſubſcribed when he neither knew the work nor the author; but that if he would call at his lodgings, he would be very willing to give all the encouragement to merit which was in his power.

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The author took down the doctor's name and direction, and made him as many bows as he would have done, had he carried off the half guinea for which he had been fishing.

Mr. Booth then took leave of the philosopher, and departed with the rest of his friends.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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